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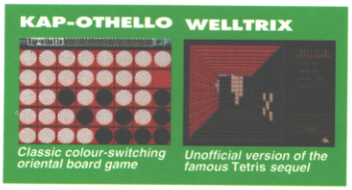

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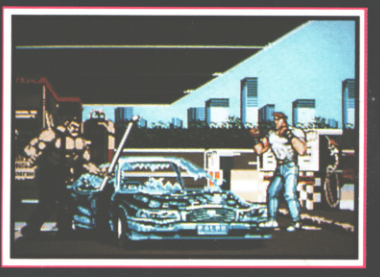

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BUY ME BEER AND WHISKEY 'COS I'M GOING FAR AWAY DEPT: Eagle eyed readers will have noted that we no longer (ahem) 'boast' the name Colin Campbell as Deputy Editor of the magazine. In massive Future Publishing reshuffles (far too complicated to go into here) young Col has been promoted to editor of the C64 magazine Commodore Format, moving to the floor above us, while his empty seat has been filled by new staffie Matt Squires. Matt started his journalistic life on New Computer Express, which begs the question...

JUST WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS?: It's a bit sad this one – we've closed the magazine. Quite simply, NCE wasn't working – yes, it'd seen off its direct rivals like Popular Computing Weekly, yes, it was still selling a respectable figure, but equally it's been becoming clearer and clearer that monthly, single format titles are really 'where it's at', and supporting a weekly news-based mag seemed more and more of a dead end. So we decided not to any more. And that's it really. All the NCE staff have been offered jobs on other titles – no one's out of work – so hurrah for that at least.

COMPETITIONS: No room this month! Sorry. Normal service will be resumed as soon as poss.

AMIGA POWER comes to you from Future Publishing, home of Britain's best 'leisure' computing magazines. There's Amiga Format, Amiga Shopper, ST Format, Your Sinclair, Commodore Format, Amstrad Action, Sega Power, PC Plus, PC Answers, Public Domain, PC Format and 8000 Plus which are computery, Classic CD, Needlecraft and Mountain Biking UK which, erm, aren't.

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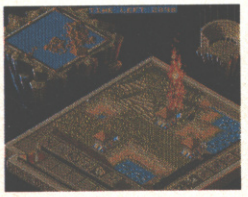
14 TRUE STORIES The secrets of the new Amiga revealed – yes, there is one! – plus sneak previews of next year's biggest games, your favourite regulars (Oh Dear..., Recommended, Don't Quote Us, Crib Sheets) and more!

25 THE CHARTS Uppers, downers, somewhere-in-the-middlers – you'll find them all in our official Gallup charts. And guess who's gone straight in at number one..!

61 COMPLETE CONTROL The world's greatest Amiga tips section, featuring *Switchblade II, Armour-Geddon, Lotus II, Populous* (again!), *Powermonger, Spindizzy Worlds* (and many, many more!)

82 WHAT A LOT YOU GET! Christmas is coming, and the compilations are getting fat. What you need is the complete AMIGA POWER guide to this year's bargain boxes – which ones are a waste of money, which ones are great value, and which merely *sound* like they are...

GAMES OF THE MO



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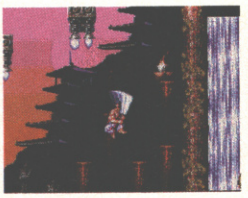
One of the five best Amiga games we've ever seen Page 28



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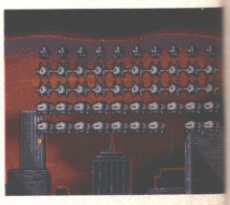
Arcade adventure of the year Page 34



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They're back! (back! BACK!) Page 3

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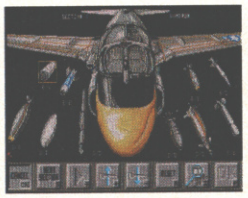
Colourful, gorgeous, a real contender Page 42



FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER
Well, they *really* took their time... Page 46

HEIMDALL
They simply don't come much lovelier than this Page 4

78 ALL I WANT FOR XMAS...

The pages which you leave lying 'subtley' open with a ring around what you fancy for prospective present buyers to find. (And no, you can't have the girl...)

109 DEFINITION OF SOUND Introducing a new regular series of AMIGA POWER Buyer's Guides, where we lead you through the increasingly complex jungle of old games. This month: puzzlers...

117 DO THE WRITE THING It's the world versus Stuart N. Hardy. Ladies and gentlemen, time to start placing your bets...

129 THE BOTTOM LINE Now a giant seven pages long (!), The Bottom Line remains the most honest and comprehensive guide to golden (and not-so-golden) oldies there is. Nobody can afford to miss it!

138 SECOND OPINION Dominique Cor of Infogrames brings a certain – how d'you say? – Gallic flourish to the reviewing game.

It's the 'world famous' San Fransisco police car race (yes, really!) and it wants a good home!

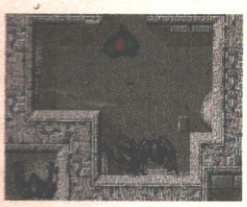
115 CISCO HEAT COMPETITION

Roll up, roll up – this is quite possibly the best prize ever given away in AMIGA POWER! It's a real *Cisco Heat* coin-op, worth a good few grand easily, painted trendy red, white and blue, and just itching for a place in your living room!

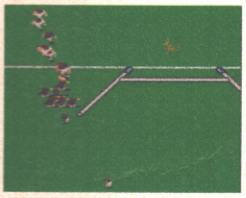
OVER 300
GAMES RATED IN EVERY ISSUE!

MONTH

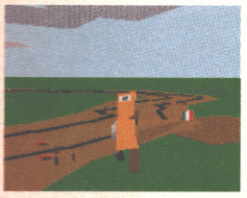
CAPTAIN PLANET
Pretty... and really pretty awful Page 40



ALIEN BREED
Just imagine *Gauntlet* crossed with the movie Aliens... Page 52



RUGBY - THE WORLD CUP
Rugby done the *Kick Off* way Page 54



KNIGHTS OF THE SKY
Conclusive proof – wizard kites *are* more fun! Page 56

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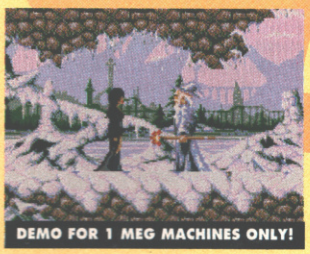
disk EIGHT

"All my life through, the new sights of Nature made me rejoice like a child" – Pierre Curie (famous scientist)
"Art is ruled uniquely by the imagination" – Benedetto Croce (Italian philosopher)
"A great deal of contemporary criticism reads to me like a man saying: 'Of course I do not like green cheese; I am very fond of brown sherry.'" – G. K. Chesterton (British novelist)
"When all is said and done, no literature can outdo the cynicism of real life; you won't intoxicate with one glass someone who has already drunk up a whole barrel." – Anton Chekhov (19th century Russian dramatist)
"The eighth AMIGA POWER coverdisk features demos of Image Works' coin-op conversion *Cisco Heat* and *Elvira - The Arcade Game* from Flair, as well a couple of nifty board/puzzle games from the Public Domain to tie in with our buyers' guide feature Definition Of Sound on p.109, namely *Welltrix* and *Kap-Othello*. You'll love it!" – Stuart Campbell (AMIGA POWER staff writer, 1967-1991 and counting...)

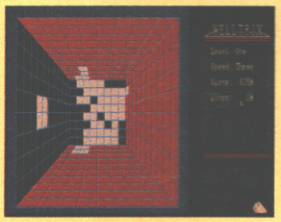
AND THIS IS DISK EIGHT

CISCO HEAT
Jaleco's wild driving coin-op is the subject of our big compo this month, but in case you don't win, why not try out this first level of the Amiga conversion from Image Works? You'll probably have almost as much fun!

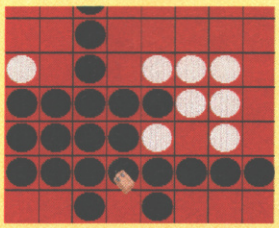
ELVIRA
This paragraph is an official Bosoms-Joke-Free Zone. So, er, we can't think of anything to say about *Elvira* at all at this moment in time. Why don't you play this section of the forthcoming arcade adventure from Flair while we go and wash our minds out?



AND THE BEST OF PD



WELLTRIX
Following on from last month's fabby *Tetris* clone *Super Twintris*, we're quite astonishingly proud to present you with this PD version of the first official sequel, *Welltris*. It's almost identical to the original game, except that it doesn't cost anything. Jings!



KAP-OTHELLO
Continuing with this month's rather puzzle game-ish kind of a theme, here's a PD conversion of the classic colour-switching board game. It'sgot a board, it's got counters – it'sgot the lot! And it's really quite spiffing too. Crivvens!

disk EIGHT

HERE WE GO, HERE WE GO (ETC)

Loading your AMIGA POWER cover disk couldn't be any easier if we actually came round to your house and did it for you ourselves! Firstly, ensure your machine is switched off, with a joystick plugged into Joystick Port Two and a mouse in Joystick Port One. Now insert the cover disk into the internal drive and switch the power on. A menu should appear after a short delay – simply select the game or demo you want to play, press the relevant key, and away you'll theoretically go. Things to remember include the fact that the *Elvira* demo is for those of you with expanded memory (1 meg or more) only, and that it's always a smart move to keep the disk in the drive at all times while playing.

WORK IS A FOUR LETTER WORD

So your disk doesn't work, then? So what do you want us to do about it? Do we look like your mother? I mean, next I suppose you'll be wanting an easy three-step guide to how you should go about getting it all running properly? Something along the lines of:

1. Try removing all peripherals from your machine except for the joystick and mouse and starting again from scratch.
2. If you still get no joy, you've probably got a corrupted disk. You might be able to repair it using the Disk Doctor utility which came supplied with your Amiga. Disk Doctor is found on the Workbench disk, and instructions for using it should be in your user manual. It's not actually likely to be all that much help, but you've got nothing to lose so you might as well give it a go.
3. If neither of those approaches bears fruit, your disk is dead. Luckily, we run a handy disk-reviving service, which you can avail yourself of by securely packing the disk in a jiffy bag and sending it with a stamped addressed envelope to – AMIGA POWER Disk Eight Returns, Disk Copy Labs plc, Unit A, West March, London Road, Daventry, NN4 4SA. Give them 28 days or so to get a working disk back to you, but they'll try and manage it as quickly as they possibly can.

DRIVING THE CHAMPION'S WAY

After Stuart's top exploits winning us the coin-op to give away, the Ed said he was just the chap to give you all a demo of amazing *Cisco Heat* driving for this page. "No prob", said he. Oh yeah?

CISCO HEAT

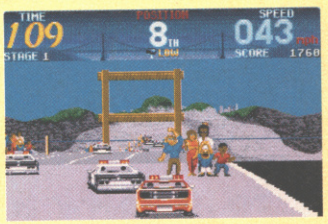
Publisher: Image Works

ANOTHER CLASSIC PLOT

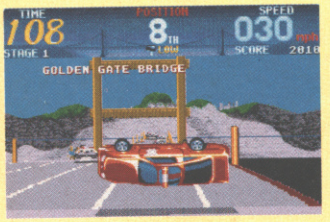
As every 14-year-old joyrider knows, the San Francisco Police Department contains some of the world's finest drivers. Involved in death-defying chases every day, the only thing up for debate about the brave officers is which one of them is the best. To solve the dispute, every year the Department cordons off the city streets and the boys in blue race each other through the centre of town. Professional pride is at stake, which means only one thing – the centre of San Francisco's going to be no place for pedestrians...

THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO

Cisco Heat features an accurately-mapped simulation of the real streets of San Francisco, complete with hills, crossroads and tramlines. Strangely, it also features loads of other cars, trams, trucks, taxis, buses and so on, despite the fact that the



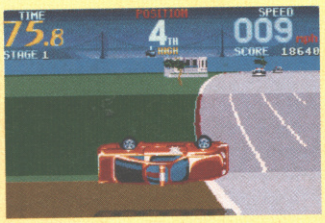
Watch out for those spectators!



Oops.

Ahem, anyone can make a mistake. On we go across the bridge...

Watch out for that tree!



Oops.

The first big junction (Bay St). Watch out for that Stop sign!

ELVIRA – THE ARCADE GAME

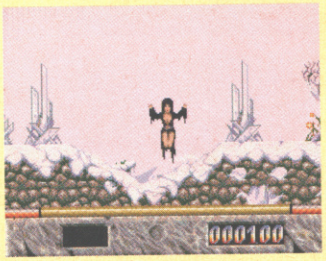
Publisher: Flair

PLOTS - WE LOVE 'EM

After the less-than-enthralling experience of her last game, Elvira falls into a deep and fitful sleep. Unfeasibly, though, she is soon awoken by one of her old ancestors, King Noy of Transylvania, who sends her on a mission. ("What mission?" - reader's voice) "What mission?", I hear you all ask with a single voice. God knows, but whatever the mission is, its successful completion will result in Elvira conveniently inheriting the Kingdom of somewhere-or-other and its staggering castle. Despite already not being able to throw a brick in her backyard without hitting half-a-dozen castles, Elvira decides that this sounds like just the mission for her. Sadly, what with her just being a girl and all, she can't manage it by herself, which is where you come in.

WHAT A PAIR

Yes, you certainly do make a great twosome, you and our generously-proportioned heroine. Between you, you must guide Elvira around three massive levels (this demo is a section of the first one), where she'll encounter traps, puzzles, but most of all ghouls and ghosties and all manner of unpleasant and evil-minded beasties with antisocial behaviour patterns. Not that our ample-bosomed beauty is worried by such trifles – this Elvira is armed and dangerous. At a press of a button, she'll launch any of several different varieties of missile from within the folds of her flowing robe, and it's bye-bye bad guy time. What's more, the well-endowed witch also has several magic spells at her disposal, or at least she does after she collects the spell scrolls which are found lying around the landscape. In this demo two of the spells



Well, you can't deny it's certainly an accurate representation of Elvira.

She walks, she talks, she accurately hugs landscapes. There's no end to her assets.

The key to unlocking the secrets of *Elvira*, is to find the keys to unlock the doors.

streets have supposedly been closed off, but we'll let that one drop in the interests of artistic licence. The idea, as with pretty much every car-racing game ever, is to drive at extremely high speed in order to reach the checkpoints before the ever-tightening time limit expires. Fail to complete a section in the allotted time and it's game over. The most innovative aspect of the game is the junctions – intermittently throughout each stage the course will call for you to make a ninety-degree turn at one of the city's many crossroads. This is accomplished by the simple expedient of moving the joystick in the appropriate direction, but beware – as you might expect, such turns put a heavy strain on your vehicle's roadholding capabilities, so the smart player will either slow down entering the junction, or be prepared for some heavy compensation steering on the other side. In situations like these, the trick is to find the balance between safety and speed. Find the right line and you're laughing, misjudge by a fraction and you'll find yourself flying through the air and landing on the fire escape of a multi-storey office block.

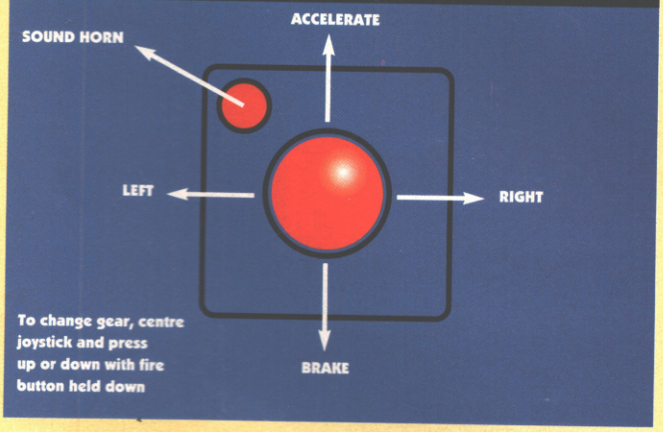
IT'S THAT PHRASE AGAIN!

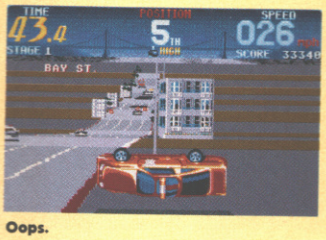
And that's about it, really. Drive fast, don't hit things, and go easy on the right-angle bends. If you're lucky, you'll survive long enough to have a decent chance of completing the race when the real thing appears in the shops on the 27th of November, priced at £25.99. ●

Watch out for those tollbooths!

Oops.

CISCO HEAT CONTROLS





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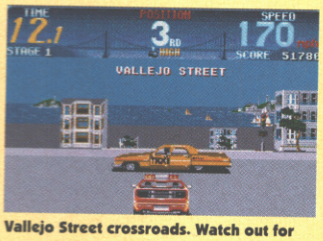
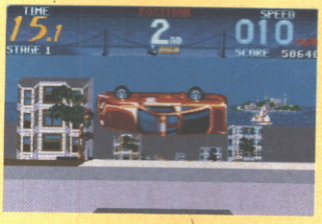


Vallejo Street crossroads. Watch out for that stupidly-placed taxi!



Oops.

Etc etc. (Hey, okay, so even a champion can have an off day...)

are active, the Teleport spell which (surprise) allows the use of the teleporters, and the Featherfall spell which prevents Elvira from dying when she falls from a great height. (For details of other collectables, see OTHER STUFF)

OTHER STUFF

KEYS – Used to open secret passages, trapdoors etc

WEAPONS – Every time Elvira walks over a weapons pot, her weapon is changed. In this demo, available weapons are the knife, flaming torch and throwing star.

TREASURE – Treasure (found in treasure chests, where else?) boosts Elvira's score.

FOOD – Shown as a cup and bowl, collecting the food icon increases your energy level.

RUNES – These rock slabs don't actually have a use in this demo, but in the full game they're used to buy important imformation.

ENERGISER – If Elvira's strength is a bit on the low side and there's no food to be found, simply walk onto the animated dome structure which will return her energy level to the maximum.

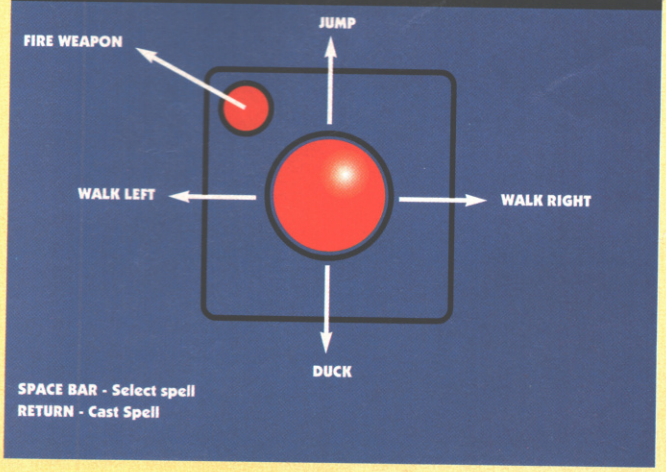
GIVE GIVE GIVE ME MORE MORE MORE

If you like what you see in this demo – and would like to play more of it – the full version of the game should be available from all good, bad and mediocre software retailers everywhere by the time you read this, priced at £25.99 from Flair. ●

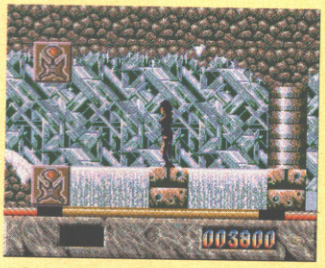
IMPORTANT!

ELVIRA WILL ONLY RUN ON MACHINES WITH ONE MEG OR MORE OF MEMORY (IF YOU HAVEN'T BOUGHT THAT UPGRADE YET, NOW MIGHT BE A GOOD TIME TO DO IT!) AND WITH ALL EXTERNAL DRIVES SWITCHED OFF. IF YOU STILL HAVE PROBLEMS, TRY LOADING IT FROM THE 512K MENU.

ELVIRA CONTROLS



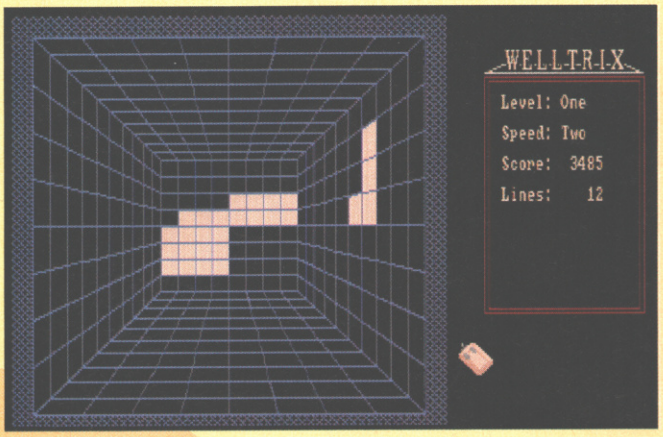
Hey, a wizard! I wonder if he wants to make friends? (Somehow I doubt it).



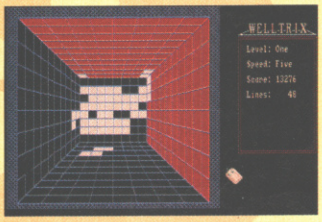
Take jump at the doorway, and – pow! – a locked door appears. Nasty.

AMIGA POWER PRESENTS THE BEST OF PD

WELLTRIX



One thing to watch out for is blocks dropping down on two faces of the well at a time (ie one block going across a corner) – the results can be very unpredictable.

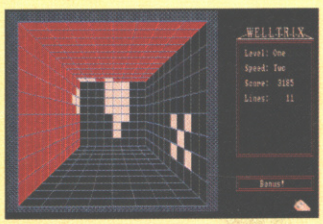


Things are getting a bit tricky here, with nowhere safe to put that awkward block.

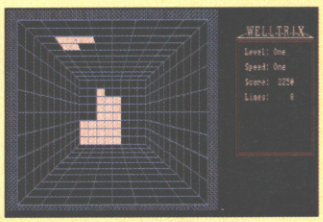
If you thought last month's two-player *Super Twintris* was a bit too simple, why not give yourself a real tryout by playing four games of *Tetris* at the same time? Well, it's not quite as tough as that, but *Welltris*, the first of many 'official' *Tetris* sequels, isn't far off. It's essentially the exact same game as its hugely popular predecessor, but instead of a two-dimensional board it's played in a 3D well. You can rotate the pieces and drop them down to form lines just the same as always, but in *Welltris* (or *Welltrix*, to give this PD clone it's correct title), you can also spin the pieces around the four walls of the well to allow you to approach the 'stack' at the bottom from any of four directions, giving you a lot more scope for constructive play. (As ever, it's a lot easier to understand on-screen than it is in print). The complication comes in if you get a piece 'stuck' so that part or all of it is jammed on the well wall, at which point that wall gets temporarily blocked off. When all four walls are blocked, you've lost the game. The only other things you have to worry about are the occasional 'bonus' blocks which get thrown at you at certain points – made up of five small blocks rather than the usual two, three or four and shaped in various awkward ways, these can really mess up your strategy. Doesn't sound like much of a bonus to anybody, perhaps, but ours not to reason why, eh?

CONTROLS

Left and right arrows move pieces around the walls, up arrow rotates pieces through 90 degrees, and the down arrow drops pieces down the well quickly when you're happy with their positioning. Other keys are 'P' to pause, 'Return' to restart, and that's about all you really need to know. Have fun. ●

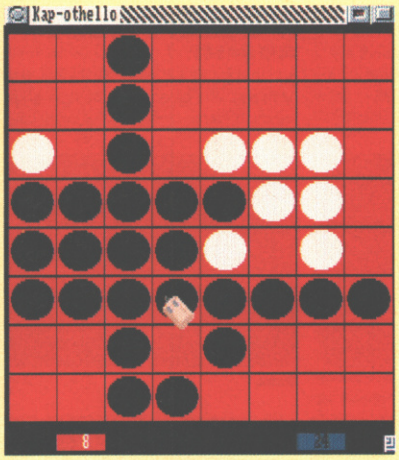


Things are looking bad – two walls are blocked off and there's a 'bonus' coming.



You can make lines horizontally or vertically, so this block can go anywhere.

KAP-OTHELLO



At this point, things look bad for the white player – or do they? It's quite possible that in fact, he's utilising the best-kept secret tactic of great *Othello* players everywhere. What is it? We're not telling you. Well, you don't want us to spoil all your fun straight away, do you? Study the picture carefully, and see if you can work it out for yourself. (But if you do, please don't call up and tell us – we already know).

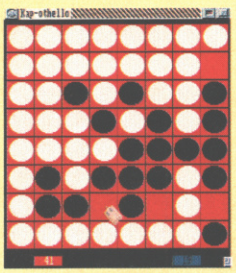
One of the oldest board games in existence, *Othello* (also known by the non-commercial name *Reversi*) is also one of the most engrossing. Classically designed with only one rule of play but an infinite number of strategies, it's a game which will still be played a thousand years from now. Of course, there aren't likely to be many Amigas around then, but in the intervening time you can enjoy this PD version which includes all the original's features – black pieces, white pieces, a board, er...

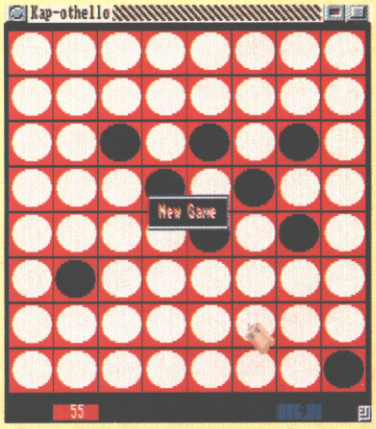
Kap-Othello is a game for one player against the computer, and the object is to 'capture' all the computer's pieces by turning them to your colour, put the computer in a position where it can't make a legal move, or simply have the greatest number of pieces of your colour when the 8x8 board is full at the end of the game.

THE RULE

Othello's one rule is a straightforward one. In placing a piece, you must play in a square immediately adjacent (horizontally, vertically or diagonally) to an existing piece, and every move must result in the capture of at least one opposing piece. A piece is captured when it is caught – in an uninterrupted horizontal, vertical or diagonal line of any length – directly between the piece played and another piece the same colour as the piece played. All pieces so caught are switched to the colour of the played piece. You play white, and turns alternate until one of the winning conditions outlined above are fulfilled. ●

These two screenshots show the final two moves being applied in a magnificent triumph of human intellect over machine programming, as white overturns a big deficit to win convincingly.

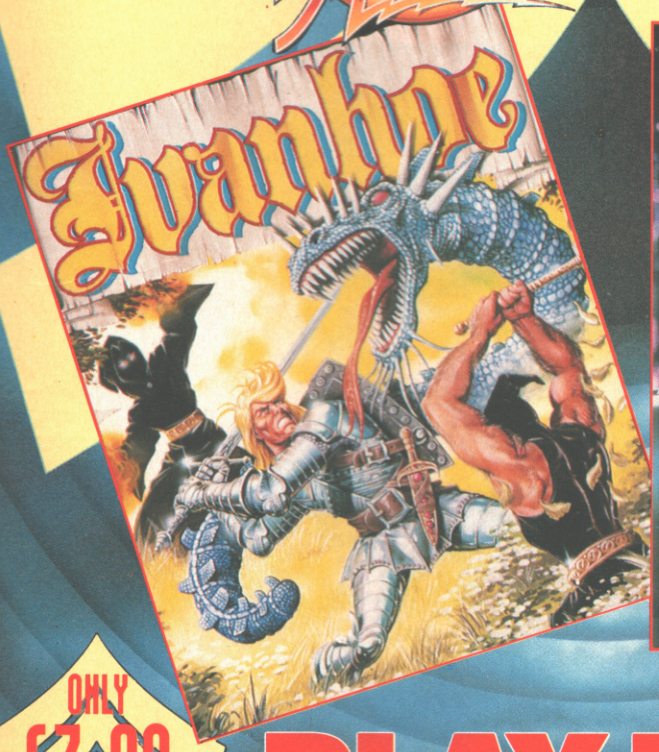


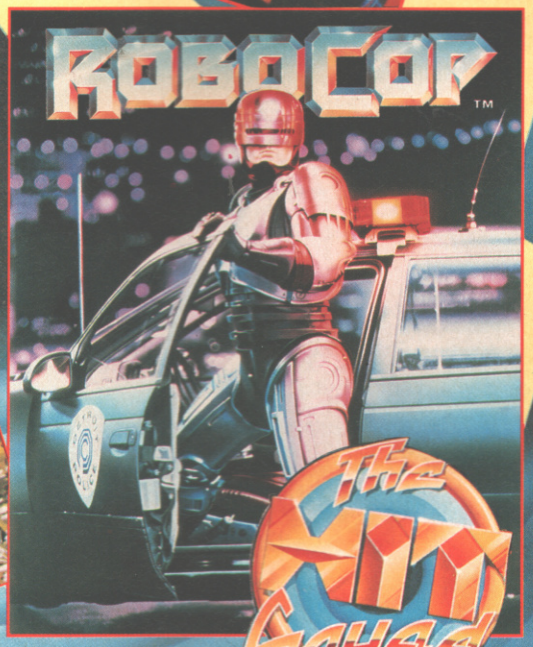


OOPS Apologies go to James Richardson, who actually wrote our excellent issue six coverdisk game *Bullfrogger* (along with 'famous' graphics gurus Simon and Alex) while spending time working with Bullfrog, but who somehow failed to get a credit for it. Hope this makes up for it, James.

TAKE ON THE SQUAD

The Hit Squad





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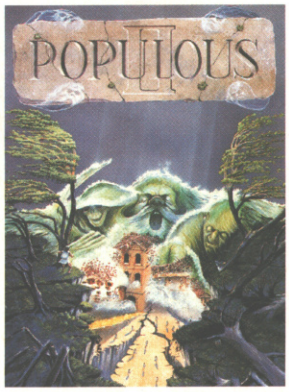
THE GODS ARE BACK AND ALL

HELL IS ABOUT TO BREAK LOOSE

Populous II has arrived and it's everything you'd dreamt it might be - and more.

More earthquakes, more volcanoes, more tidal waves,



Available late December for Amiga and ST.

£29.99

more deadly swamps, in fact the most devasting natural disasters known to man, and a few he hasn't heard of yet.

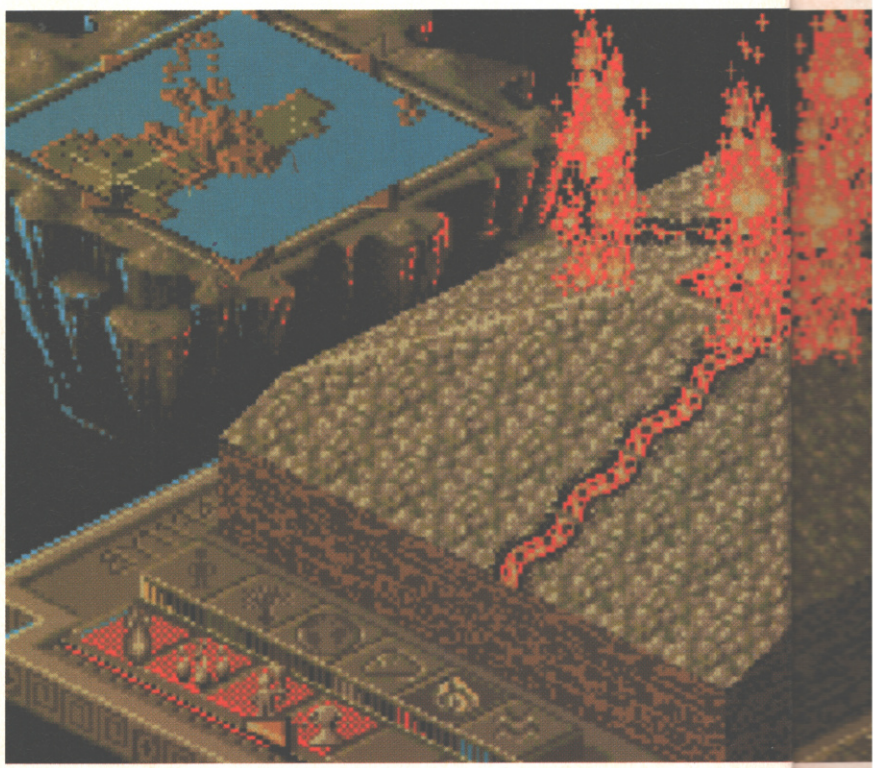
This time you find yourself back in Ancient Greece, where as one of the sons of Zeus himself, your aim is to achieve immortality and take your place next to him on Mount Olympus.

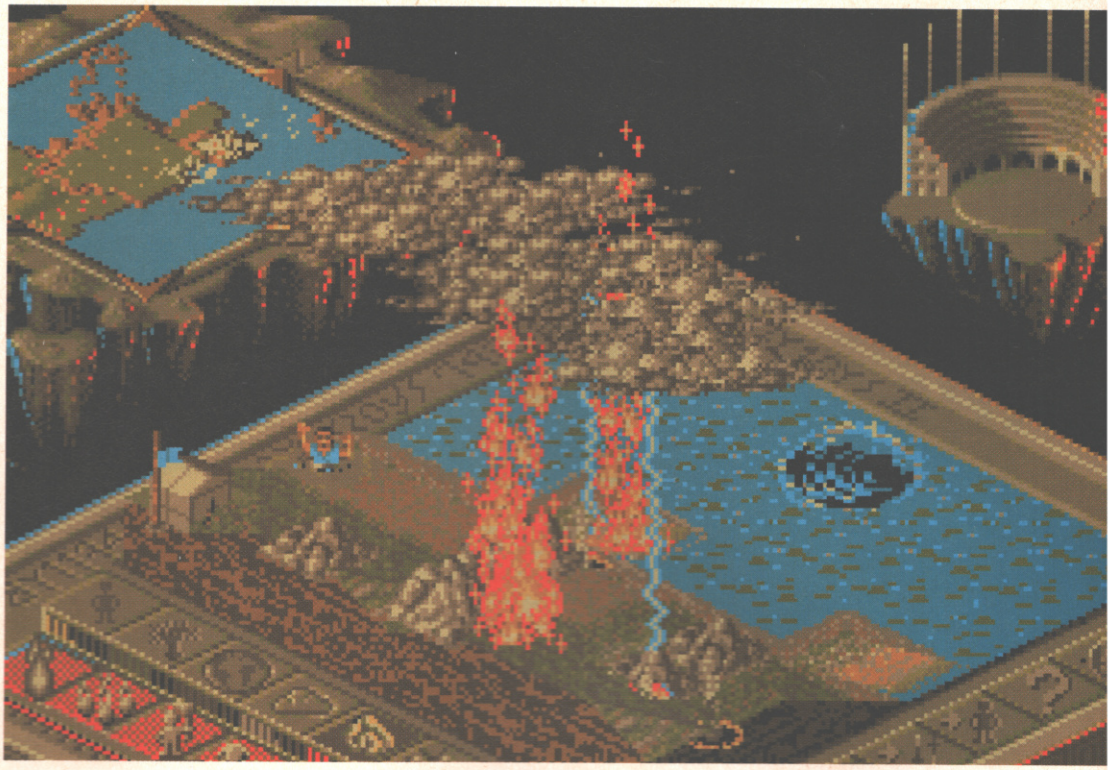
But the old boy isn't going to let you have your way without an almighty fight and he's conscripted 32 of his most powerful deities to stand in the way of your ambitions.

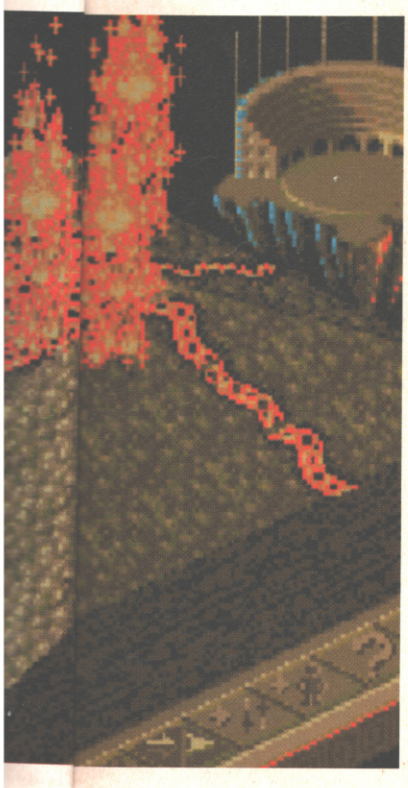
Design your own elaborate settlements with grand houses, roads and trees. Construct city walls in preparation against the oncoming rains of fire, whirlwinds, bolts of lightning and new, especially devious monsters like the foxy Helen of Troy, who leads people to their death with her beauty.

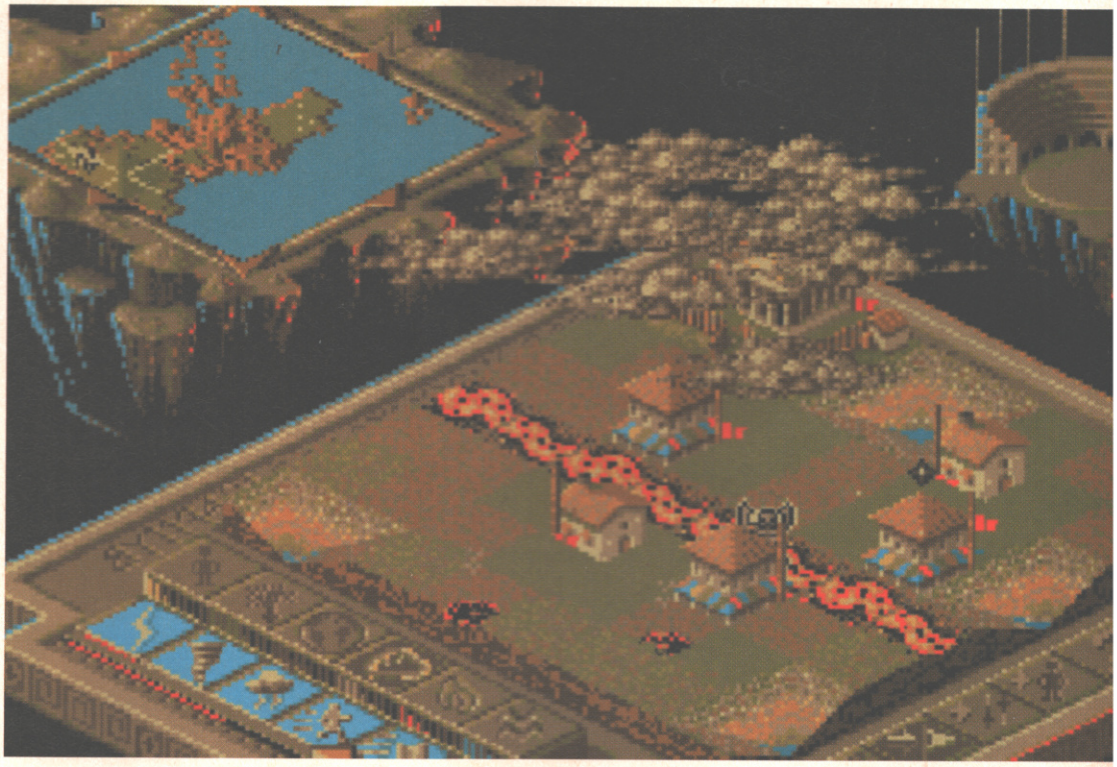
Populous II has 1000 worlds to conquer, 1MB of graphics, 5,000 animations, dozens of new sound effects and a mind-blowing sound track.

To celebrate it's release, you can also collect special Populous II T-shirts, mugs, data disks and interactive clue books from The World of Populous II which you will find in participating retailers.









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TRUE STORIES

IT'S HERE! THE NEW AMIGA A500 PLUS

Some of you may know all about this already – the ones who've bought a new Amiga over the past couple of months – but many won't. Basically, Commodore have slipped a new, improved version of the machine – the A500Plus – into current packs with the minimum of fuss. Indeed, any Amiga you buy now – and certainly the Cartoon Classics packs – will be the new machine (you can easily identify them by the slightly different key layout – you get two extra keys – and the rather snazzy 'Plus' badge).

So what's the difference?

Well, in a word, lots. For a start, the machine comes with Workbench 2, not Workbench 1.3 – a far superior system which allows for a 16-colour high resolution screen, uses neat pull down menus Apple Macintosh-style, makes autobooting easier and so on. The machine now has a 8375 HR Agnus chip (new, and very different to the previous one), a redesigned video display chip, one meg of memory as standard – without getting too technical, we're talking a superior computer. The problems it has are of software compatibility – but remember, these are very short term ones. As Workbench 2 becomes the standard, and programmers become used to the new machine, you'll find that the problem becomes increasingly negligible.

So why have Commodore done it?

To keep the Amiga competitive, of course. As consoles start to rival it as games machines and low end PCs make further inroads into the home, it's in their best interests (and ours, as Amiga users) that the machine remains the most powerful and useable you can buy for the money. Successful computers aren't ones that stay the same – they're the ones that are gradually improved as time goes by.

How do I know what software will work with a Plus, and what won't?

First off, the reason many games don't work with the Plus is that the programmers never had the chance to test their programs on the machine to make sure they would! With serious software, new versions are being developed all the time – even if the version of a word processor available now doesn't work with the Plus, you can be sure that there'll be an upgraded one along in a month or two that will.

Games are more of a problem – they tend never to get upgraded, and if you own a Plus buying an older game (say one on budget re-release) can be quite a risk. Most – if not all – of the full price software on sale this Christmas should be fine with the new machine – it's the compililations and so on you've got to watch. Your best bet is to ask if a game will work on your computer before you buy it – it's a problem most of the specialist shops, at least, will have learned to cope with by now. However, to give you *some* idea of what's going on, we've printed a list of games that definitely don't work on the right.

Don't let all this dishearten you though. What you've got to remember – as you curse some golden oldie for not working – is that this is all for your own good (and the good of the Amiga in general) in the long term. You now own a better computer than was available a few months ago.

• For more info on the Amiga A500Plus, check out the current (December) issue of Amiga Format. It's packed with information on the new machine from every angle, including a massive list of compatible software...

The Amiga A500Plus: slicker, more capable, a better machine – but dogged by annoying incompatibility problems.

GAMES COMMODORE ADMIT WON'T WORK WITH THE AMIGA 500PLUS

Bubble Bobble
Double Bill Compilation
Fantasy World Dizzy
Grandstand Compilation
Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge
Midwinter
Super Grand Prix
SWIV
Treasure Island Dizzy
Turbo OutRun

GAMES TOP SOFTWARE HOUSE US GOLD HAVE CHECKED THEMSELVES THAT DON'T WORK

Airborne Ranger
Axel's Magic Hammer
Barbarian 2
Blasteroids
Crime Wave
Dynastry Wars
Games Winter Edition
Ghouls'n'Ghosts
Heroes Of The Lance
Impossible Mission 2
Italy '90
Moonshine Racers
1943
Ninja Spirit
OutRun
Road Blasters
Skidz
Stormball
Street Fighter
Super Scramble Simulator

They also had trouble with *OutRun Europa*, but assured us that the version you buy in the shops will work, while updated versions of two recent games which also failed – *Final Fight* and *Cybercon III* – will be available soon.

And that's about as much as we know for definite at the moment – except for the fact that we've actually (gulp) come across Plus problems with some of our own AMIGA POWER cover disks! We'll keep you updated on things as they develop.

THEY'RE BACK! MULTI-EVENT SPORTS SIMS

Yes, it seems Hawk's *Championship Athletics* might not have been the one-off it first appeared after all. Here's another of those old-fashioned looking multi-event sports thingies – Empire's *International Sports Challenge* – this time avoiding the traditional waggling for an interesting selection of 'alternative' control methods. The events are unusual too – Swimming, Cycling, Diving, Shooting, Show Jumping (!) and the Marathon which links the others, 'It's A Knockout'-style. Look for a review next issue, though we do question the price – a heavily off-putting £29.99.

Is the sport sim once again poised to make a big 'splash', or has the demand for these games 'all dried up'? (*You're sacked-Ed*).

CREEPY. SPOOKY. OOKY. WOOKY.

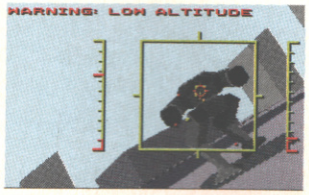
After chosing a string of second division films to base their games on (*Navy SEALs, Darkman*), Ocean have started bouncing back with the biggies. *Terminator 2* is as big as they come, of course, and *Hudson Hawk*, if not a major hit, was undeniably a big name release, but they're really getting into their stride for the next two. Yes, Ocean *do* have *Hook* – Steven Spielberg's updating of the Peter Pan story, with Robin Williams as a middle aged Pan returning to Never Never Land when his children are captured by the evil Captain Hook (as predicted in last month's 'Don't Quote Us'), but before that we'll see
their conversion of the new *Addams Family* movie, starring Raul Julia, Christopher Lloyd and Angelica Huston as three of TV's premiere monster family.

It's an arcade adventure, with you (as Gomez – the Raul Julia character) searching the Addams mansion for his kidnapped wife Morticia. Unlike many previous film tie-ins, this takes the form of one large platform-based game – sources inside Ocean are saying it's probably the best thing they've ever done, which sounds promising. The game's being designed and programmed by James Higgins (ex-*Navy SEALs* coder) and graphics artist Warren Lancashire, to be released not with the film's UK cinema premiere but when the video arrives next Easter.

GOOD COPS, BAD COPS AND... NINJA ROBOTS?

The fearsome ED209 returns in *RoboCop 3*. Note the use of vector graphics with drawn background.

Down but not out, RoboCop struggles to regain control of the situation. Note the level of detail even extends to shadows.



RoboCop takes to the air with a jet pack and a very dangerous gun – ED209's days are well and truely numbered.

We've shown you glimpses of Ocean's new *Robo 3* game before, but with the project on schedule to hit the shops – if not our review pages – this month it seemed churlish not to show you just a little bit more. This is a very different sort of film conversion, you see – in bare synopsis sounding very much like it sticks to the traditional way of doing things, in reality doing anything but.

Yes, it's got shoot-'em-up scenes – even an *Op Wolf*-style one – and yes, it's got driving sequences, but one look at the graphics tells you how different they are. They're 3D vector jobbies you see, with various scenarios played either as stand-alone missions – fight the robot ninja, invade the baddie-packed OCP building – or (in different form) as part of an on-going storyline that tells, in some loose sort of way, the plot of the film. You've much more freedom of action in this than most film tie-ins you see, with how you cope with one problem affecting the way you move into the next sequence – the plot involves a Japanese take over of OCP (the megacorporation that runs the Detroit of the future), splatterpunks running wild, evil Rehab police turning people out of their homes, Robocop-as-outlaw, a Japanese android coming to Detroit for a grudgematch, new Robo-add ons like a weapon arm and jet pack, crises of concience as Robo has to decide whether to side with the police or the people rebelling against them, and so on. Plenty of room for incident then, and the spectacular 3D makes stalking baddies down corridors (Aliens movie-style), running cars off the road (*Chase HQ*-style), beating 'people' up (*IK+*-style), taking out police spotlights (*Operation Wolf*-style) and shooting down helicopters (erm, *Falcon*-style) shine with a life of their own. Having the wide choice of internal and external views that you'd expect in a flight sim available to you during a beat-'em-up sequence is really something to see, for a start.

This is brave and innovative publishing from Ocean, name-making stuff from programmers Digital Image Design (especially graphic artist Shaun Hollywood), and bound to be one game *everyone's* going to be watching out for with interest this Christmas. Look for the full – and definitive – AMIGA POWER review next month.

***Indy* (PC): although the graphics of the Amiga version will never quite match the ones pictured here, hopes are high for a stunning conversion.**

MONKEY 2 & INDY 4: THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY

Although both *Monkey Island 2* and *Indiana Jones & The Fate Of Atlantis* aren't due on the Amiga until early '92, we think a little taster is in order. PC versions are pictured here, and as you can see, Lucasfilm's graphics just keep on getting better – the bold cartoon style of the new *Monkey Island* enhancing the game style terrifically. *Indy Jones* looks like being a triumph also, its intricate plot and fantastical set-pieces reflecting the mood of the films very closely. What with *Might & Magic 3, Eye Of The Beholder 2*, and these two Lucasfilm titles, it looks like US Gold are all set to have a very busy (and successful 1992).

In addition to yet another updated adventure parser system, *Indy* also contains puzzles, semi-simulations and fighting sequences.

Forget the challenge of the Sword-Master – *Monkey Island 2* poses far more 'serious' challenges. Here we see Guybrush phlegming up for a serious who-can-gob-furthest contest..!

***Monkey Island 2* – Bigger, better, and hopefully funnier.**

CRIB SHEETS

This month's our profile focuses in on...

CORE DESIGN LIMITED

Contact: Core Design Limited, Suite C, Tradewinds House, 69/71A Ashbourne Road, Derby DE3 3FS. Tel. 0332 297797

History: Formed originally as a development house in October 1988, they went into publishing for themselves last year. Their first product, *Corporation*, scored a hit when published at the end of August in 1990. Founders and directors of the company are Jeremy Smith, the Managing Director, and Kevin Norburn, the Financial Director.

People: Core employ 24 full time staff, 19 of whom are directly involved in the development of software. Best known among the creative staff are probably Mac Avery, the *Thunderhawk* programmer, and graphic artist-cum-games designer Simon Phipps.

Greatest Success: Pre-self publishing days, Core were perhaps best known for their *Rick Dangerous* games for Firebird/MicroProse and *Switchblade* for Gremlin. Since going it alone, however, they've managed a number of sizeable hits – *Chuck Rock* and *Thunderhawk* being standouts. *Thunderhawk* was "a radical change for the company," claims spokesman Richard Barclay, "but if you ring up in a few months time I'll probably say the same thing about *Heimdall*."

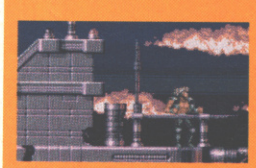
Greatest Failure: "We haven't had a failure as such – every product has least broke even. There have really been no failures at all," says Barclay.

Typical Core Design game: "Hopefully I'll be able to look back on things from 18 months down the line and be able to say *Thunderhawk* has proved typical of the standard of game we've produced," says Barclay.

How they see themselves: No longer a small company, Core are now edging into the middle ranks of UK leisure software publishers. It's not because they're particularly prolific, but because they've managed to maintain the trick of making each product a sizeable hit.

How do other people see them: As far as developing games is concerned, Core Design have earned themselves a good deal of respect. Gremlin, MicroProse and Virgin are all publishers who have had products developed by Core, with hits including *Switchblade* and *Axel's Magic Hammer* for Gremlin, *Rick 1* and *2* for MicroProse and *Monty Python* for Virgin. They've got a similar solid reputation with the public – while not quite in the Bitmap league, it's starting to head into Psygnosis territory as far as brand loyalty is concerned. "Confidence in the company's products is so high that people are saying 'send us the next game on the Amiga' before they've even seen it," Barclay claims.

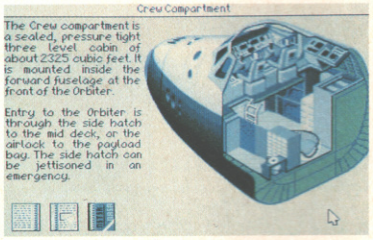
Product development: A game is first storyboarded on paper from start to finish – something that can take up to three months – before any further development takes place. Using mainly in-house programmers, products are "finished and finishable" on paper before a large amount of money is spent on development – something Core swear by as guarantee that the project comes to a satisfactory and (often equally important) deadline-meeting conclusion.



The *Strider*-like *Wolfchild*, coming soon from Core.

FLIGHT SIMS NOT COMPLICATED ENOUGH? OKAAAY...

Imagine the most complicated flight sim you've ever seen. Now double the number of controls. Now add a few more. You'll be starting to get some sort of idea of the scale of things with *Shuttle*, Virgin's upcoming Space Shuttle simulator being put together by Vektor Grafix. By all accounts the game is spotlessly accurate – or at least, as spotlessly accurate as you can get when none of you actually work at NASA – to the point that Vektor boss Andy Craven has claimed he could now fly a real Space Shuttle from the research he's done on the game (whether the rest of the Vektor Grafix team would be willing to go up in such a craft isn't actually on record!).



Virgin's *Shuttle*: supremely complicated, accurate, and life-dominating – and available to you (with luck) next spring.

FRP, TV-STYLE

Fans of *Captive* – and there are plenty of you around, so don't be shy – will be itching to see Tony Crowther's *Knightmare*, based loosely on the well known TV show and using the established *Captive* game mechanism. The programme – apparently ITV's most popular non-animated children's show – can best be described as live role playing for real. Set in a combination of real sets and computer generated backdrops, it features teams of four kids solving puzzles and riddles in an attempt to work their way through the dungeons to a confrontation with the evil Lord Fear.

The computer game version draws on much of the background of the TV show, mixing it with Tony Crowther's *Dungeon Master*-influenced RPG engine. In many ways it comes across as a souped-up *Captive*, including many features intended for the original game but never actually included. One of the main differences between *Knightmare* and *Captive* is that this new one is actually a much smaller game – it lacks the could-go-on-forever aspect of *Captive* – but a much more sophisticated one. We just hope it doesn't prove a bit too sophisticated and tricky for the younger fans of the TV show. Anyway, we'll all be able to see for ourselves soon enough – the new game (full meg *not* required) should be on sale from Mindscape by the time you read this at a fast-becoming-standard £29.99.

Unmistakably based upon the *Captive* game system, *Knightmare*'s most obvious competition could prove to be *Eye Of The Beholder*.

HMV ARE BACK!

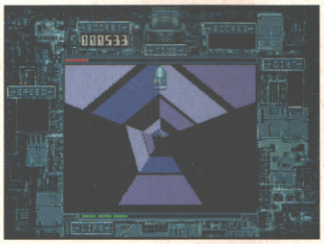
But they've never been away, you're probably saying. Well, no – they haven't, not as far as records, tapes and CDs are concerned, anyway. Computer games-wise, they've been quiet since the heyday of the Spectrum, but no more – large HMVs on Oxford Street, in Reading and in Southend form the spearhead of an experimental scheme to return Amiga, ST and PC titles to the record shop shelves. The *real* legitimising of the computer entertainment industry starts here...

BULLFROG PROGRAMMER IN CLOTHES SHOW MODEL SHOCK!

Would you let this model write your game?

There've been triple celebrations at Bullfrog lately. Not only is *Populous II* finally finished (see review), not only is a new agreement with EA sorted (meaning, among other things, that Bullfrog products now go out under the Bullfrog label), but *Flood* and '*Bob*' programmer Sean Cooper (see AP2) got through to the final eight in the BBC's Clothes Show Model Of The Year Award 1991, shown on BBC1 back in September. You may have seen it – he sucked his cheeks in effectively, but didn't quite demonstrate the cheeky-chappie personality required to win. (Still, the cover of Just Seventeen's loss may well be our gain...)

BIZARRE IS NOT THE WORD

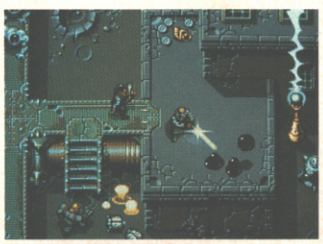


3D rotating tunnel travel in the very surreal *Psyborg*, from Loriciels.

Imagine you're walking along a long, multicoloured platform set in space. Right, now imagine it's not actually a platform but a sort of five-sided tube jobbie you're passing down the middle of instead, but with lots of sections of the walls/floor/whatever missing, so to stop falling off you have to twist the whole thing around to provide some solid ground under your feet. And then imagine you have to fight monsters you come across as you pass down the tube. If you can get your mind around that – check the screenshots for help – you should be some way towards understanding *Psyborg* from Loriciels, available some time in December. (Only some way, though. The finished game – which apparently represents some sort of battle between a human psychic and alien invaders – is almost guaranteed to be even weirder than that. Look for a better explanation, with the review, next issue).

CHAOS CONTINUES

Fans of the Bitmaps Brothers will be keen to see how their latest project – the Victorian, *Gauntlet*-inspired *The Chaos Engine* – is coming along, and who are we to deny them? Here you can see one of the rather gorgeous character development/weapons screens – decked out in true Jules Vernian brassery – while the platform and monster strewn main screens look among the most spectacular of their type. The game is already at an advanced stage, but you won't be seeing any reviews or copies in the shop for a while yet. They've got to make sure all the sophisticated artificial intelligence for the various characters – as pioneered in *Gods* – work properly yet, but more than that these boys believe in *playtesting*...



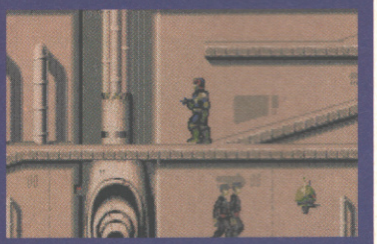
***The Chaos Engine* – the trend towards multi-player games continues as the Bitmap's latest gets closer to release.**

Oh dear...

Hell hath no fury like a game which inspires us to yawn...

JUDGE DREDD (Virgin)

There ought to be a law against the software industry crushing the hopes of millions of comic fans twice in one lifetime. After a crap licence on the 8-bits by veteran firm Melbourne House a few years back, Dredd lovers had a right to expect something a bit better for the most uncompromising lawman this side of James Anderton, but in fact, what they got after months of waiting was a game so poor it should have been cubed up long before it got anywhere near the public. Gameplay thinner than the instruction manual, a Dredd sprite more reminiscent of Walter Matthau in a commissionnaire's outfit and a control method so rank it'd make a chihuahua chuckle meant that the two crappy little prehistoric arcade games the Judge could play on his 'terminal' before the game started actually trebled the entertainment value of the package. When you think of the rollercoaster cyberpunky urban slaughterama frenzy that a Dredd game could and should be, it's enough to make a stockbroker-belt Tory MP with a big mouth but nothing interesting to say with it out of anyone (ooh, bit of politics there, our name's AMIGA POWER, good – er, sorry, lost it for a minute). Never mind *Judge Dredd*, call Judge Jeffries immediately. Programmers? Hang 'em and flog 'em, the whole bloody lot of 'em.



You have been judged, and the sentence is death. (Well, what did you expect?)

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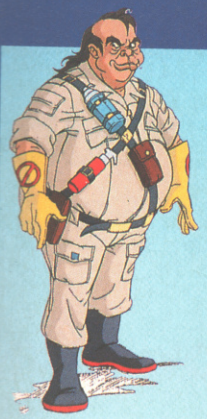

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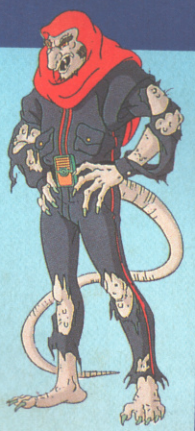

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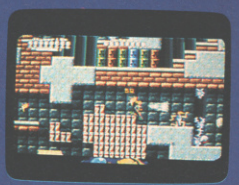

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Don't quote us

Welcome to the second of our regular guessing-game columns – the bit where we put out heads together and speculate outrageously on games that various software people may (or may not) be intending to do in the future. Last month we kicked around with various film based ideas, so this time round let's plunder some other areas instead...

• Comics have never yielded their full potential on computer screens in the past, but two possibles that might are Jamie Hewlett's Tank Girl (rumoured to have movie companies interested too) and the brand new Batman/Judge Dredd team up. Tank Girl would seem a real natural for Virgin of all people – they're a) into unusual licences and b) have used Hewlett for their own promotional artwork in the past...

• Following the success – at least reviews-wise – of *Rugby: The World Cup*, plenty of other long-ignored sports must now be being assessed for the *Kick Off* treatment. For the more well bred amongst you, polo would be a natural – it's a fast team sport played over a large area, and since you're talking top-view here it even neatly sidesteps that traditional programmer's stumbling block, the difficulty of properly animating horses. Water polo would take the *Kick Off* treatment well too, as would (non-ice) hockey, but the real piece de resistance would have to be croquet. Like a miniature golf game, it'd be a doddle to program too...

• No? Don't like that? Well, what about this then? For ages – and particularly this Christmas – we've been arguing about ways in which you could make a beat-'em-up *really* work. In fact, the only other thing we argue so much about is the relative worth of various bands – a thought that suddenly stopped us in our tracks. It's obvious – how about a pop stars beat-'em-up? You could have all these very different looking, and differently animated, fighters (you'd probably have to use thinly disguised charicatures instead of the real folk for legal reasons) for you to take out your anger on. What an excellent idea...

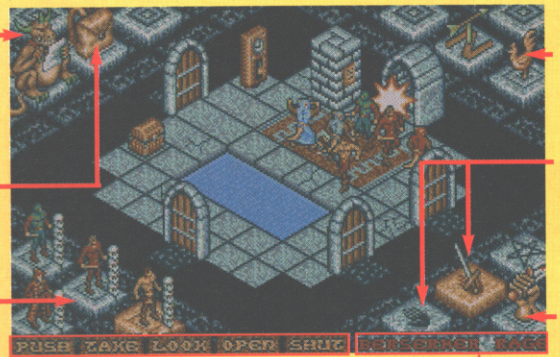
• Of course, *some* pop stars we all like. The Beatles, for instance, who'd be great for a computer game – strong characters, great tunes, incredibly distinctive Yellow Submarine-style graphics. If Stuart Campbell liked *The Blues Brothers*, imagine how he'd go for this one! The potential for funny little incidental details is positively overflowing too – we like the idea that you have these great songs when John, Paul and George are on, but when you're playing Ringo it regresses into the simplest of no-hope drumbeats...

• We have a cunning plan...TV shows are so much bigger and more important than films ever are in this country that we're surprised there aren't that many TV-based games about. Lots have potential, but our all-time favourite has to be Black Adder – in the style of *Monkey Island*! The idea merely has to cross your mind for the potential to leap out at you – and with four series of the show set in different time periods you have ready-made sequels built in.

• Speaking of TV, what about a Red Dwarf game? Lots of strong characters, plenty of plot and incident, and just about every programmer we ever meet owns at least one Red Dwarf T-shirt. At least they'd be putting their efforts into something they really care about...

• Strip poker games keep rearing their ugly heads despite anything anybody says about them (there's one reviewed this issue), but they're all done with such little wit and imagination there's bound to be a lot more potential in them somewhere. How about having famous politicians or public figures stripping instead of the girls, for instance? You could either put the famous head convincingly onto a very non politician-like body (easily done), or run with cutting carticatures instead. Who knows what cheeky secrets could be revealed about our political favourites by the time the last hand had been won?

GREAT GAME NAMES? (WE AIN'T GOT 'EM!)



Fans of *Bloodwych* – now released on compilation and budget (see elsewhere this issue) – will be itching to see the uninspirationally titled *Legend*, the new prequel designed by *Bloodwych*-creators Tag. Once again it's an 'adventure role playing with strategy' type thing, packed with sub-quests and expanding the action far outside the boundaries of Treihadwyl (the town *Bloodwych* took place in). With presentation split between the 2D and isometric 3D (for the dungeon bits), it includes many traditional FRP elements (taverns where you collect information, praying giving you extra luck points, 'guilds' where you gain experience points to help you out on the next level, parties of characters made up of various RPG 'types'), but dispenses with others, noteably the need for your people to find food to keep them going all the time. This can be "dull, and get in the way of gameplay" claim publishers Image Works, which is why it's not in there.

Much of the game is based around the creation and use of spells – all sorts are available, created by mixing the various ingredients you come across, and use of them can get increasingly sophisticated. (For instance, to safely use a 'smart bomb' spell you'll have to make sure your own characters are immune to it first). With 24 different levels (fewer than the 40 odd in *Bloodwych*, though these are much larger) it's certainly a game to fill those long winter evenings – look for a release in January.

HOT DOGS, COLD PLACES

Yet another console-like platform game. Braybrook's *Fire And Ice* looks good, but then it'd have to be – there's no shortage of hefty competition.

Possibly the last product we'll see from the troubled Graftgold in its present form, *Fire And Ice* (first mentioned way back in AP issue one) is now approaching completion. It's a multi-level platform arcade adventure, featuring a wolf-like hero on a mission to save all the little puppies of the world from the fire and ice demons who've taken over the planet (or something). Plenty of neat touches – melting ice ladders, flabby arctic-baddies – and neat graphics in familiar Amiga arcade game style make this a stylish but perhaps non-too distinctive product.

Look for a full review of this major Image Works release within the next couple of issues.

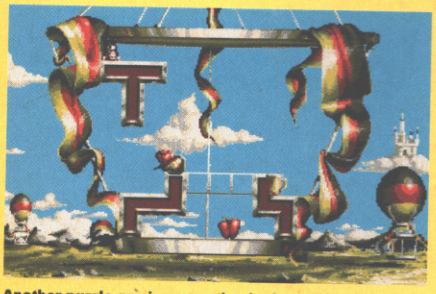
IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

Yes, you're right, it looks like *Choplifter* – but it's a *Choplifter* for the 90s! With deliberately drab, M.A.S.H.-like colours and intricately drawn jungles (put together Paul Docherty, who's done some of the graphics for the spectacular *First Samuari*), *Apocalypse* provides a fast paced, atmospheric multi-weapon shoot-'em-up with a difference. Yes, you've got to blow up the jungle huts, and yes, you've got to fry the little men who take pot shots at you – the difference is that you've also got to land and collect the little *Lemmings*-like hostages who swarm out of smashed-up concentration camps and have to be ferried back to safety too. Scheduled for release in early 1992, it's been put together by the less-than-prolific Strangeways: big mates of Gary Penn's who've yet to actually publish a game! Look for a release in early '92 from Image Works – March or April would be good bets.

***Apocalypse*: nothing if not a *Choplifter* for the '90s – apparently the 'copter used in the game is based on a yet-to-be-released US military model.**

TAKING OVER THE WORLD, METHOD NO 216

Take a good chunk of *Puzznic*, a slice of *Lemmings* and a smattering of *Tetris* and you're halfway towards *Devious Designs*, an odd (aren't they all?) puzzle game from the Edinburgh-based team of Pete Baron and Bob Stevenson, and published by Image Works. Apparently the evil Doctor Devious is trying to turn the whole world into cubes (as you do) – it's your job, as rebel hero JJ Maverick, to move the cubes around the screen until they make up the shape of a famous real world icon or relic (early levels include a London bus, a VW Beetle, the Eiffel Tower and so on) thus restoring them to their normal state. It's all against the clock, of course, which makes it less than easy – especially as many people find it pretty hard getting their minds around the concept, or the unusual control method, at all. Look for a review next ish with luck.

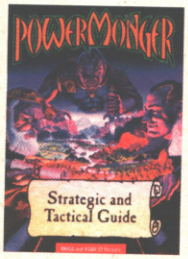


Another puzzle gaming sensation in the making (or something) – it's all down to *Devious Designs*.

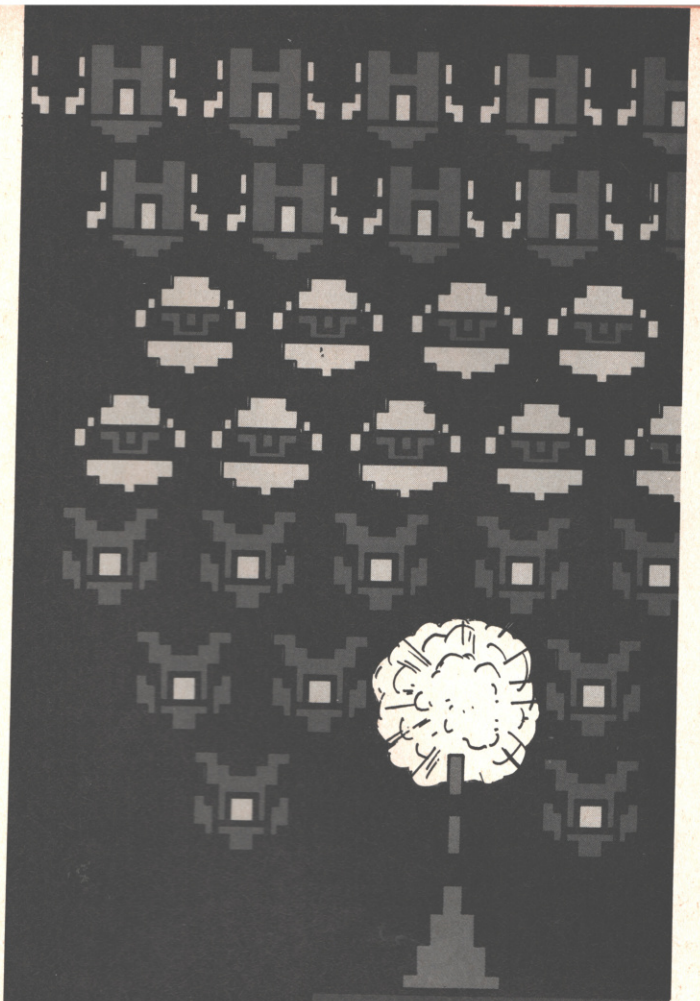
EURO FOOTIE

Expect a rush of football games to rival the World Cup flood of the summer of 1990 next spring, as the European Football Championships spring into gear. Domark's *Euro Football Champ* is based on the Taito coin-op, plays from the (non-*Kick Off*) grandstand viewpoint, and is controlled through four key players per team. Fouling is even allowed – if you can get away with it without the ref seeing, that is! And other new football games? Watch this space...

HERE'S SOMETHING NEW...



...or fairly new anyway – books acting as player's guides to big name 16-bit games. As ever, they've been pioneered by American companies (EA, for instance, do oodles of them) for their long shelf life strategy/sim products. This one – a newie from Electronic Arts – is for *Powermonger*. It's quite useful, but the flowery language, olde worlde typeface and brown text on yellow paper make using it more of a struggle than need be. Nice idea though. (Available from computer shops or EA at £7.50).



IN 1979 THIS WAS THE PHENOMENEN THAT SHOOK THE WORLD...

SPACE INVADERS

PROBABLY THE MOST FAMOUS COMPUTER GAME OF ALL TIME...

BUT, THAT WAS THEN...

JOYSTICK ROUND-UPS: THE DEBATE STARTS HERE

Joystick rounds ups, eh? Whenever some people criticize AMIGA POWER they say things like "Oh dear, you're going just like all the other mags – you'll be doing joystick round-ups next", while others write, "Why aren't you more like Amiga Format and review hardware, add-ons and so on?". The easy answer to that last one is that we're a games mag, and games are *all* we do – though it's true that joysticks form an interesting grey area. Should we do a buyer's guide? (Why not write in and tell us?). In the meantime though, we've no problem giving them *some* sort of coverage, especially when they joysticks in question stand up and say "Look at me!" as loudly as these ones do...

THE BUG AND THE TORTOISE

Cheetah – famous for their 125+ range of joysticks – have (on the surface of it, anyway) gone slightly mad, releasing a series of joysticks based on well known animals. The Bug, a rounded hand-held unit with a twiddly little shaft, two big bug-eyed fire buttons and odd 'insect-like' mouldings, is strange looking to say the least, but in fact works superbly – it's perhaps the most comfortable hand held yet, seems well made, costs £14.99, and for those with small hands comes particularly recommended.

The other new unit, the Tortoise is, it's fair to say, much more the novelty item. Nicely moulded, and package in a cardboard box with air holes allowing it to breath (!), it sits, mouse-like, on the desk on its four sucker legs and, erm, wobbles. Control is by moving the shell back and forth on its back, which may not sound like it'll work, but does – just. We had real problems getting anywhere on *Super Space Invaders* with it, and a game with more limited movements required (left, right, fire) you're unlikely to find. At £9.99 it's not outrageous value, but it's an expensive way to get a few laughs.

QUICKJOY FOOT PEDAL CONTROLLER

This one looks and sounds weird, but makes a spooky sort of sense when you think about it. It's got three pedals – spaced like the clutch, brake and accelerator in a car – and is designed to be used in conjunction with a joystick for (mainly) some of the non-movement functions. For driving games its usefulness is obvious, but distributers Spectravideo claim it's also particularly useful for the rotate controls of a *Thrust*-type game or helping you get your minds around more complicated beat-'em-up movements. Worth checking out anyway; it comes at a not-too-unreasonable £24.99.

MEGA STAR

Finally, we've got Quickjoy's latest, the Mega Star, with transparent styling, three fire buttons, a short, stubby shaft, and a desire to be "closer in style and response to the joysticks seen in the arcades than any other stick." A quality product then, but an expensive one – the Mega Star goes on sale at a cool £27.95.

AMIGA POWER RECOMMENDS

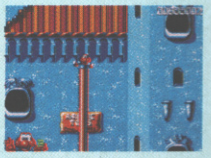
Cash burning a hole in your pocket? You've come to the right place...

FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX (MicroProse)

While Amiga flight sims proliferate like rabbits, 'serious' driving games like this one are a scarce commodity. *F1 GP* is (arguably) only the second entry in the field, but it might as well be the last – it's almost impossible to imagine it being significantly bettered in the near future. Totally slick, beautiful to look at and so user-friendly it'll make you your breakfast in the morning, *F1 GP* is the driving game to end them all (probably). An absolute must-buy.

THE BLUES BROTHERS (Titus)

Film licences, on the other hand, are in plentiful supply. Unfortunately, almost none of them are any good, but this release from Titus – a company with a previous turkey record only rivalled by Bernard Matthews – breaks the 'lots-of-crappy-sub-games' mould with a magnificent platform romp bursting at the seams with character and playability. Great music from the movie rounds the whole thing off beautifully, leaving *The Blues Brothers* an unqualified triumph.



ROBOCOD (Millennium)

Okay, so we might have sacked Colin (don't believe all that 'Commodore Format' nonsense) for saying this was better than *Rainbow Islands* in his review last month, but it's still a pretty damn fab console-style epic with some of the sweetest graphics ever. Steals from *Lemmings*, *Sonic* and the aforementioned *Rainbow Islands* – plus a quirky sense of humour – give it extra character, too. If you've ever even remotely liked playing cute arcade games, you won't regret buying this for a second.

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE II (Gremlin)

Er, you know we said *F1 Grand Prix* was the driving game to end them all? Well, it was true. (Ha, fooled you there!). The *arcade racing game* to end them all, however, could well be this gorgeous sequel from Gremlin, which takes the basic idea from the already excellent *Lotus I* and improves on it significantly – not least with the use of the whole screen in one-player mode. Fast, smooth and monstously playable – but don't try driving like this at home, kids!

BUBBLE BOBBLE (The Hit Squad)

Better than *Rodland*? Well, possibly. There are those of us here who thought the Ed was losing the few marbles he had when he claimed it, but that doesn't alter the fact that this cute platforms-and-dinosaurs epic is probably the best simultaneous two-player arcade game ever invented. In fact, it's so good, even girls like it! "Fancy a game of *Bubble Bobble*, babe?" could well replace "Wanna come up and see my etchings?" as a chat-up line for a generation, and we can think of no higher accolade.

MAGICLAND DIZZY (Codemasters)

On looking at this you might be forgiven for thinking it was any one of the Codies' previous *Dizzy* efforts, but – hey! – if you've got a winning formula, why muck about with it? *Magicland Dizzy* combines dazzlingly bright cartoon graphics and brain-teasing arcade adventuring fun with the same great success as *Treasure Island* and *Fantasy World* before it, and our money's on it still being in the Top 20 this time next year. An unmissable budget bargain.

IMPRESSIONS GO UP IN THE WORLD

Up into the air, to be precise – after their various naval and land battle simulations, Impressions' latest is *Fighter Command* (£29.99), a strategy game with planes in. Lots of planes too – AWACS, F-16s, B-52s, Stealth Bombers, Harriers, Tornados, Jaguars, MiGs, Mirages and so on, as well as various helicopters, missiles (Exocets, SAMs etc) and the like. Set in the modern day Middle East (though a later scenario disk will cover WW2) this is, of course, all about chosing bases, manipulating personnel and so on – more the task of an ancient Air Vice Marshal than your hot dog Top Gun pilot. Still, you can't deny plenty of people like this sort of thing – look for a full review of it (and perhaps its *Fort Apache* stable mate too) next issue.

SHADOWLANDS BY NAME...

...*Shadowlands* by nature. Domark's great white RPG hope for February may or may not "give access to the largest and most fascinating world ever seen in an RPG" – it isn't really important. What matters about the game is how a sense of atmosphere is created – a new system called Photoscape illuminates the game landscape in a hopefully realistic manner (torches creating light and casting shadows, say), allowing for a number of silhouette effects, light-activated traps and so on. Packed with puzzles, presented in 'trendy' isometric 3D, and featuring teams of four definable characters, it joins the intriguing castle-based coin-op conversion *Rampart* as one of Domark's releases for next year that we're *really* keen to see.

Domark get in on the 3D fantasy adventure trend with the interestingly 'photoscoped' *Shadowlands*.

MOVE OVER ROLLER BABES...

Rollerball, the spiritual ancestor of eight or nine Arnie movies, is coming to the Amiga! The original future sport – an ultra-violent mix of roller skating, speedway, hockey and, erm, killing people – caused a sensation back in the mid-seventies when it was first released, so it'll be interesting to see if Microids conversion (released in this country through Palace) can rekindle the interest. In fact, after a period of extreme quietness, Palace are starting to come through with the goods once again – they've Microids' *Hot Rubber* racing game, *Barbarian III* (no relation to the Psygnosis series, but a beat-'em-up 'sadly' missing Maria Whittaker from the first games), *Hostile Breed* (a 'strategic shoot-'em-up'), and *Jekyll And Hyde* (the successor to their unusual *Demoniak* text adventure, see AP1) all lined up between now and next spring.

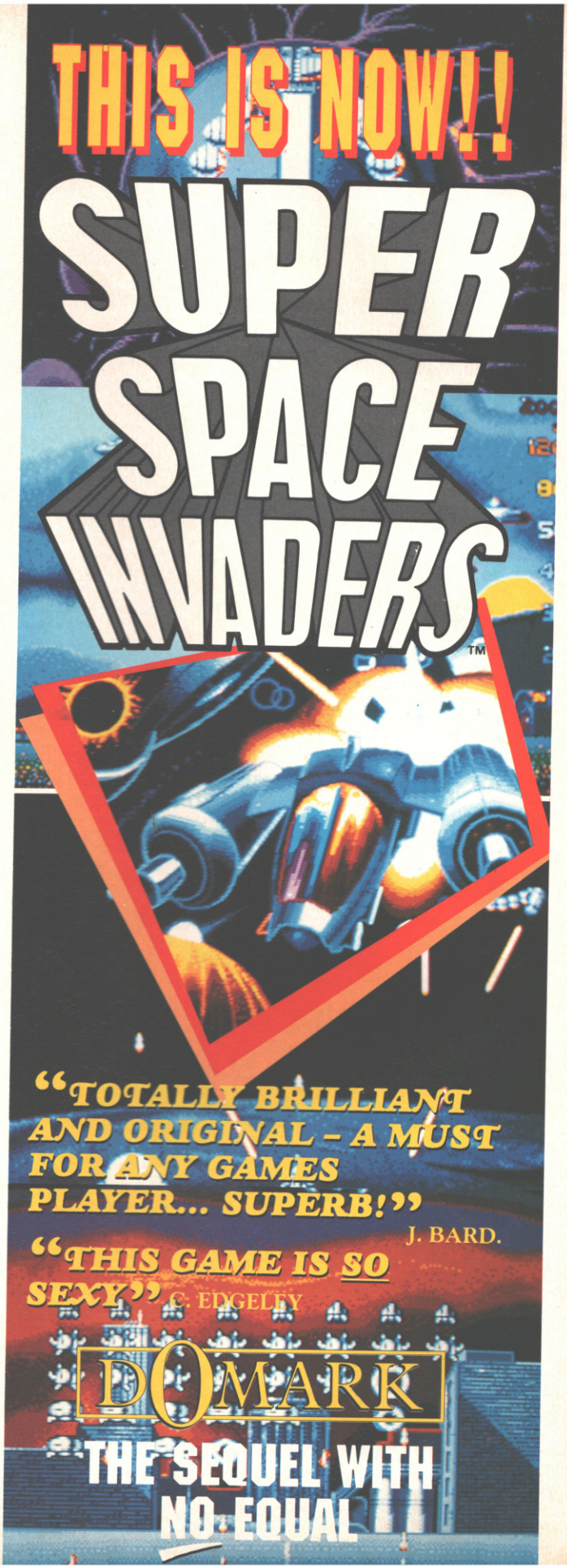
WHOOOOOOOOO OOAH! INDEED!

Remember *Hard Drivin'*? Of course you do – the coin-op was one of the most distinctive arcade machines of '89, and if the Domark conversion was a bit of a slow failure, it was at least a likeable one (and a massive hit!). *Race Drivin'* is the arcade sequel (*Hard Drivin' II* was a home computer invention), giving Domark the chance of a second crack at it – indeed, in their promotional stuff they boast that the new conversion is "noticeably faster" than the original, so at least they can see the problems.

New features include two new tracks (a 'Super Stunt Track' and the 'Auto Cross Track') alongside the original Stunt and Speed tracks, a choice of three cars, a 'Buddy' race where your lap is rerun by the phantom car so your 'buddy' can race against it and try to beat your best time, the possibility of linking two computers and – yes! – five cows mooing by the roadside instead of *Hard Drivin's* one! Check out the review next issue – the potential's there.

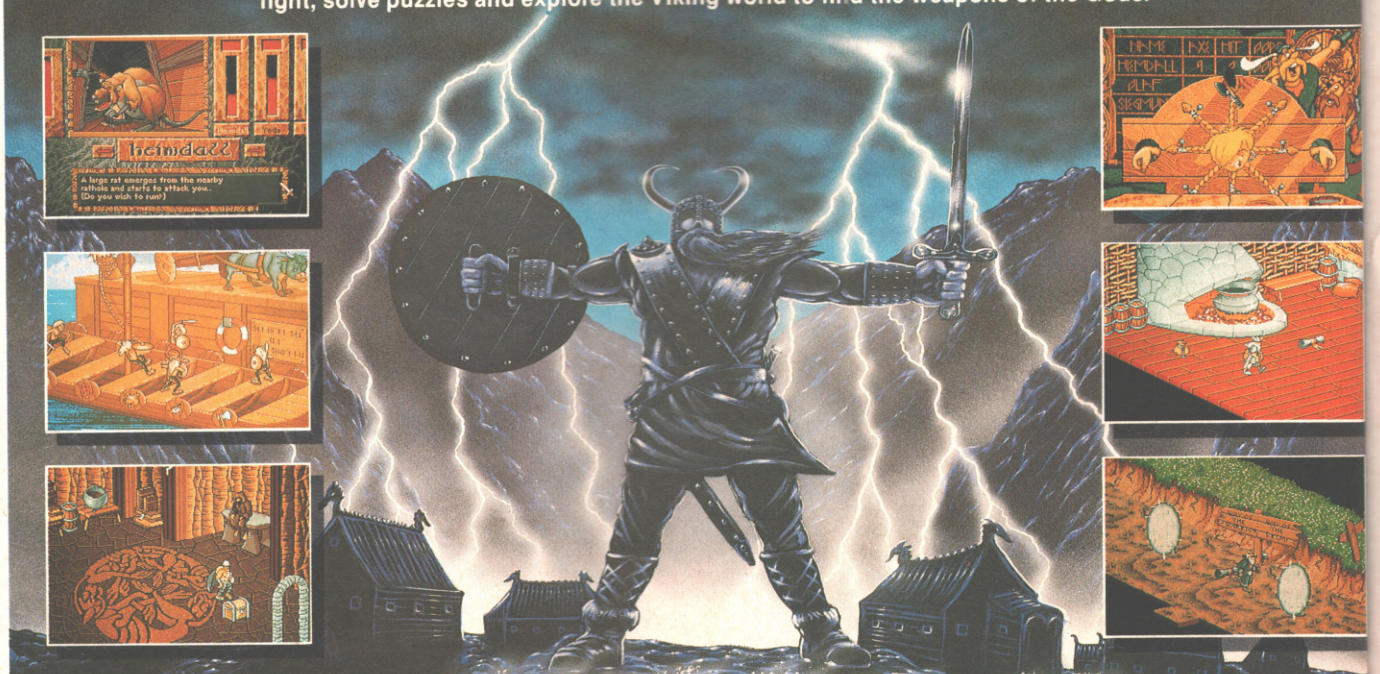
You'll flip over The Corkscrew.

***Race Drivin'* – the 'official' sequel to the *Hard Drivin'* arcade game.**



HEIMDALL

Norse legend tells of a time when the Gods of Valhalla and Asgard created a race known as the Vikings. Born to represent his people at the battle of Ragnorak, Heimdall must first fight, solve puzzles and explore the Viking world to find the weapons of the Gods.



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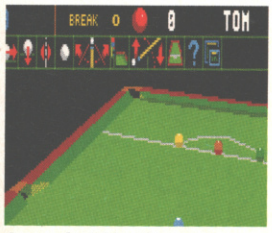
POT BLACK FOR WHIRLWIND WHITE

Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker
(New entry, No 1)
There'll be dancing in the streets of Ladbrook Grove tonight – this is Virgin's first Amiga number one for quite some time (last year *Golden Axe* peaked at number two), and it's a deserved one too.



A sequel could well be on the cards for the Snooker number one

To get a game going in straight at number one is even more remarkable – especially when it gobbles up close to 35 percent of the market in the process! Not surprisingly, Virgin's Marketing Manager Andrew Wright is jubilant – the game "deserved it", he said, though he wouldn't confirm rumours of a sequel. "There might be one, but I might not want to announce it at the moment – you can draw your own conclusions from that," he said mysteriously. Hmm. Sequel or no sequel, there's no real hurry – it's safe to say we can expect the game to be hanging around the Top 20 for a good six months.

SILENT SAILING TO NUMBER TWO

Silent Service II
(New entry, No 2)
MicroProse have been developing this game – the sequel to 1985's multi-national award winning *Silent Service* – on the Amiga for the past nine months. It shows too. The upgraded sequel, while not for the impatient, boasts improved graphics and sound, with both new game design and scenario too.

MicroProse's Julia Coombs is understandably happy: "the original version sold very well and you could tell by the first day's ship out that *Silent Service II*

***Silent Service II* – long awaited sequel surfaces at number two**

would do well also. We feel really good about it – obviously the quality of the product shone through. It was extremely successful on PC and we're expecting great things on the Amiga. We have a lot of faith in this game".

AMIGA POWER GALLUP CHARTS
AMIGA TOP 100

····· Exceptional ····· Nearly there ···· Very good ··· Has its moments ·· Flawed · Dire

1 (NE) JIMMY WHITE'S SNOOKER Virgin £29.99 *****
2 (NE) SILENT SERVICE 2 MicroProse £34.99 ****
3 (24) CRUISE FOR A CORPSE US Gold £27.99 *****
4 (NE) BUBBLE BOBBLE Hit Squad £7.99 *****
5 (NE) RETURN TO EUROPE Anco £7.99 ***
6 (NE) TERMINATOR 2 Ocean £25.99 *
7 (1) THUNDERHAWK Core Design £30.99 ****
8 (3) FULL CONTACT Team 17 £9.99 ***
9 (NE) SHADOW OF THE BEAST Sizzlers £7.99 ***
10 (4) TV SPORTS FOOTBALL Mirror Image £9.99 **

11 (11) PGA TOUR GOLF
Electronic Arts £25.99 *****
12 (NE) DRAGON NINJA Hit Squad £7.99 *
13 (7) MONKEY ISLAND US Gold £27.99 *****
14 (9) MANCHESTER UNITED EUROPE
Krisalis £25.99 ****
15 (NE) MAGIC POCKETS
Renegade £25.99 ***
16 (14) LOMBARD RAC RALLY
Hit Squad £7.99 ***
17 (NE) FLAMES OF FREEDOM Rainbird £34.99 ***
18 (5) SUPERCARS GBH £7.99 ***
19 (2) NEW ZEALAND STORY
Hit Squad £7.99 *****
20 (8) FANTASY WORLD DIZZY
Code Masters £6.99 ****
21 (6) NORTH AND SOUTH
Action Sixteen £7.99 ****
22 (20) PRO BOXING Code Masters £7.99*
23 (NE) INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE (ACTION GAME) Kixx £7.99 **
24 (NE) RODLAND Storm £25.99 ****
25 (19) DEFENDER OF THE CROWN
Mirror Image £9.99 ***
26 (18) RAINBOW COLLECTION
Ocean £19.99 *****
27 (13) F15 STRIKE EAGLE 2
MicroProse £29.99 ***
28 (12) NINJA RABBITS Micro Value £6.99 *
29 (15) EYE OF THE BEHOLDER
US Gold £30.99 *****
30 (NE) BATMAN – THE MOVIE
Hit Squad £7.99 ***
31 (10) CABAL Hit Squad £7.99 ***
32 (25) LITTLE PUFF Code Master £6.99 **
33 (16) XENON 2 Mirror Image £9.99 ****
34 (36) LEMMINGS Psygnosis £25.55 *****
35 (41) CONQUEROR Kixx £7.99 ***
36 (NE) SCOOBY DOO & SCRAPPY DOO
Hi-Tec Software £7.99 ***
37 (48) ELF Ocean £24.99 ***
38 (23) THE GAMES – SUMMER EDITION
Kixx £7.99 **
39 (NE) LAST NINJA 3 System 3 £25.99 ***
40 (NE) ROBIN HOOD Millennium £25.99 ***
41 (NE) HEAD OVER HEELS Hit Squad £7.99 *****
42 (21) BLOOD MONEY Sizzlers £7.99 **
43 (35) SINBAD Mirror Image £9.99 **
44 (17) SHINOBI Mastertronic £7.99 **
45 (30) FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR 2
GBH £7.99 **
46 (34) MIAMI CHASE Code Master £7.99 ****
47 (29) ROCKET RANGER Mirror Image £9.99 ***
48 (50) WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD
Kixx £7.99 ****
49 (28) TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY
Code Master £4.99 ****
50 (NE) FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER
Spectrum Holobyte (Mirrorsoft) £34.99 ****
51(26) RED HEAT Hit Squad £7.99 *
52 (RE) CONFLICT EUROPE Mirrorsoft £24.99 **
53 (31) WATERLOO Mirror Image £9.99 **
54 (32) BEACH VOLLEY Hit Squad £7.99 *
55 (44) STRIKER MANAGER
D&H Games £24.99 **
56 (39) 3D POOL Mirror Image £9.99 ****
57 (45) CARRIER COMMAND
Mirror Image £9.99 *****
58 (NE) MEAN MACHINE Code Masters £7.99
59 (43) DUNGEONS...'N' EVERYTHIN'
Atlantis £6.99 *
60 (46) KICK OFF – WINNING TACTICS
Anco £12.99 **
61 (27) ARMOUR-GEDDON
Psygnosis £25.99 ****
62 (77) SPEEDBALL Mirror Image £9.99 ****
63 (22) IMPOSSAMOLE GBH £7.99 *
64 (65) KICK OFF 2 Anco £24.99 *****
65 (RE) STEVE DAVIS WORLD SNOOKER
Blue Ribbon £9.99 **
66 (54) CALIFORNIA GAMES Kixx £7.99 **
67 (42) RUN THE GAUNTLET Hit Squad £7.99 *
68 (79) RAILROAD TYCOON
MicroProse £34.99 ****
69 (95) THREE STOOGES Mirror Image £9.99 **
70 (63) DOUBLE DOUBLE BILL
Image Works £35.99 ***
71 (40) LIFE AND DEATH Mindscape £25.53 ***
72 (49) SUPER LEAGUE Energize £7.99 **
73 (38) R-TYPE Hit Squad £7.99 ***
74 (64) LAST NINJA 2 Hit Squad £7.99 **
75 (NE) THEIR FINEST MISSIONS
US Gold £15.99 ***
76 (33) GODS Renegade £25.99 ****
77 (RE) GREMLINS 2 Elite £24.99 **
78 (37) INTERNATIONAL KARATE +
Hit Squad £7.99 *****
79 (NE) TURRICAN Kixx £7.99 ***
80 (RE) FUN SCHOOL 3
Europress Software £24.99 **
81 (56) KID GLOVES GBH £7.99 ****
82 (RE) TURRICAN 2 Rainbow Arts £24.99
83 (93) MOONWALKER Kixx £7.99 *
84 (67) 1943 Kixx £7.99 *
85 (RE) MUDS Softgold £24.99 **
86 (80) SUPER HANG ON Hit Squad £7.99 ****
87 (RE) VIGILANTE Kixx £7.99 **
88 (RE) HYDRA Domark £24.99 *
89 (87) OUT RUN Klassix £7.99 **
90 (86) SKY CHASE Mirror Image £9.99 **
91 (RE) STUN RUNNER Domark £24.99 *
92 (52) HERO QUEST Gremlin £25.99 ****
93 (99) VIRTUAL REALITY 1 Elite £34.99 ***
94 (53) FINAL WHISTLE Anco £12.95 ***
95 (NE) BALLISTIX Sizzlers £7.99 *
96 (94) AMOS Europress Software £49.99 ***
97 (75) SUPERCARS 2 Gremlin £19.99 ****
98 (RE) JACK NICKLAUS GOLF
Accolade £24.99 **
99 (55) TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES
Image Works £24.99 **
100 (90) GRANDSTAND Domark £29.99 **

We figure you must have some idea how the charts work by now, so briefly: they're put together by Gallup, they mix budgies and full pricers together, games are rated in stars, and they're © ELSPA.

And can we expect to see a *Silent Service III*? "There is nothing on the schedule for the next year but that isn't to say we haven't any plans". Indeed no – remember, there's been a six year wait since the last one!

CLIMBING CORPSE!

Cruise For A Corpse
(Climber, No 3 from No 24)
A new entry last month in the Amiga Top 100, *Cruise For A Corpse* has climbed an amazing 21 places to reach this month's number three spot from a

Cruisin' for a bruisin'. The *Corpse* digs its way up to number three.

disappointing 24 last month. It's taken French software company Delphine – never the most prolific of developers – two years to develop the game for US Gold.

Released in early September, the past month has seen the game rocket in sales throughout major retail stores and independents. US Gold Product Manager, Alexa Czechowski, commented that this surge in sales "shows the product's quality" and she's every right to be pleased – this game is merely the latest in a string of exceptional graphic adventures coming through the Birmingham software giants, *The Secret Of Monkey Island* (still in the Top 20) being but one.

BUBBLE YET TO BURST

Bubble Bobble
(New Entry, No 4)
This cute arcade classic, originally a Firebird title, has recently had two new leases of life – first it was re-released in mid September as part of the successful *Rainbow Collection* with *Rainbow Islands* and *New Zealand Story*, where it reached number two in last month's Amiga Top 100, and now as a stand-alone budgie. It deserves it too, it's a great little game – Hit Squad manager Pat Kavanagh told us that they're "very pleased with *Bubble Bobble* at the moment". The Hit Squad currently have four titles in this month's Amiga Top 20. *Dragon Ninja* is a new entry at Number 12, while *Lombard RAC Rally* has been selling consistently since its release in May. Originally released as a full price game by Mandarin/Database, The Hit Squad bought the 16-bit rights to release it on budget.

***Dragon Ninja* is quite an old beat-'em-up title which was originally released by Ocean as a full price title. Pat Kavanagh explained that they " were hoping for a higher spot" than its entry at Number 12, so look for a climb. ●**

STORM

SALES CURVE

DOUBLE DRAGON III

THE ROSETTA STONE

TRADEWEST

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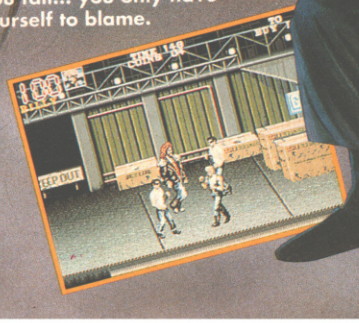

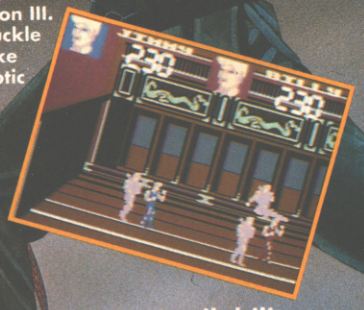

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JUST WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE?

MATT BIELBY

Following last month's flood of driving games – and the onset of cold weather, meaning mountain bikes are finally 'out' – the AP team have been buying cars. Matt hasn't got one yet so we can leave him here...

Matt's been playing: ***Populous 2, Robocod, Volfied***

STUART CAMPBELL

...and neither has Stuart. He drove his mum's Metro into a concrete road bollard once, spun the same one sideways across a grass verge (narrowly missing a dog) another time, and probably isn't allowed to have one now.

Stuart's been playing: ***First Samurai, Head Over Heels, Asteroids*** **PD (still!)**

MARK RAMSHAW

Mark is though. It's a small, white, but rather nippy Citroen AX GT which he pays thousands of pounds of insurance on and drives over to Cheltenham most weekends (when he's not out seeing bizarre bands) to see his girlfriend.

Mark's been playing: ***Pegasus, Mega lo Mania***

RICH PELLEY

Rich drives his mum's purple Mark1 Escort – almost a collector's item these days, except it's so crap – which has bits hanging off it, a selection of 'interesting' dents and rarely goes. We say: get a new car, Rich!

Rich's been playing: *Alien Breed*, doing his homework

GARY PENN

Gary got rid of his black XR2i last year – a sad day for all, because it contained a fine collection of Kinder Egg cars which he'd placed on the dashboard in front of the speedo and which bounced all over when he took a tight corner!

Gary's been playing: *R-Type II, Armour-Geddon, Bombuzal* (!)

AMANDA COOK

Amanda Cook's got two cars (greedy thing) – a two thirds share in a black Honda CRX race car (now converted to road use but lacking a back seat) and a yellow beach buggy. We say: give us one, 'Manda! (And a car!)

Amanda's been playing: *Kwik Snax, Volfied, Baby Jo, Loopz*

LISA NICHOLLS

Lisa's been a student for such a long time she's got no money and won't be able to afford a car for ages and ages. So: send all your spare cars to Lisa Nicholls at the usual AP address and you'll make a young girl very happy.

Lisa's been playing: *Loopz, Super Space Invaders*

NEIL WEST

Young Neil owes his bank about £8,000 (£8,000!!) or something, and had to sell off his beloved Triumph Spitfire to help pay some of it off. "She was lovely," he says, coming over all misty eyed. Aww.

Neil's been playing: *Xenon 2* ("Two years after everyone else!"), *Road Rash* (Sega)

JONATHAN DAVIES

Ever the trend setter, Jonathan cruises around on a Saturday night in the motor to make them all jealous – a maroon Austin Montego with yellow velour seats. "It's a real bird-puller," he says. Oh dear...

Jonathan's been playing: *Flight Of The Intruder* "and lots of flight sims."

COLIN CAMPBELL

Cappuccino Colin's hard – he doesn't believe in the cosy comfort of cars, but instead tools around on an orange Vespa motor scooter. "I'm not a mod though," he says, "I just know what's cool." Erm, yes...

Colin's been playing: *Rugby – The World Cup, Suspicious Cargo, Pegasus*

GAMES

Roll up, roll up – it's time for the AMIGA POWER review section, quite simply the biggest and bestest, erm, review section in Christendom. This month we've got ten (ten!) full price games covered in our in-depth two, three and even four-page front-end reviews – and they're some of the best releases seen this year too. Just check out the first two for starters – the MIGHTILY IMPRESSIVE *Populous 2* finally arrives (the complete low-down begins just over the page) while Vivid Image's *First Samurai* shows everyone how arcade adventures really SHOULD BE DONE. It really is the bee's knees.

In fact, arcade-style players are IN FOR A TREAT this month, with colourful platform fun (*Captain Planet*), shoot-'em-up thrills (*Super Space Invaders* or the *Gauntlet*-inspired *Alien Breed*) or sports action (the *Kick Off*- influenced *Rugby – The World Cup* or the stunning *MicroProse Golf*) to chose between. Things are looking up for the more, ahem, INVOLVED GAMES PLAYERS too, with a couple of flight sims and Core's gorgeous Cinemaware-style *Heimdall* queing up to be mulled over.

Hai! The *First Samurai* leaps into spectacular action (p34).

Phew! So that's the BIGGEST AND BEST out of the way – but what about the remainder? Well, things are really happening in our second reviews section too – with games like *Covert Action, Shadow Sorceror* and the excellent *Volfied* around it could HARDLY BE OTHERWISE – while a couple of pages later (page 100, fact-fans) the budget round-up kicks into action (starring the stunning *Scooby Doo And Scrappy Doo*!) closely followed by our monthly selection of the best of PD. This isn't just the biggest ever issue of AMIGA POWER, it's got more games than ever reviewed in it too – especially if you count the new (bigger!) Bottom Line...

Yowch! *Baby Jo* (p94) learns a little bit about fire.

THE AMIGA POWER SCORING SYSTEM (AND HOW IT WORKS): AN EASY-TO-USE BEGINNERS GUIDE

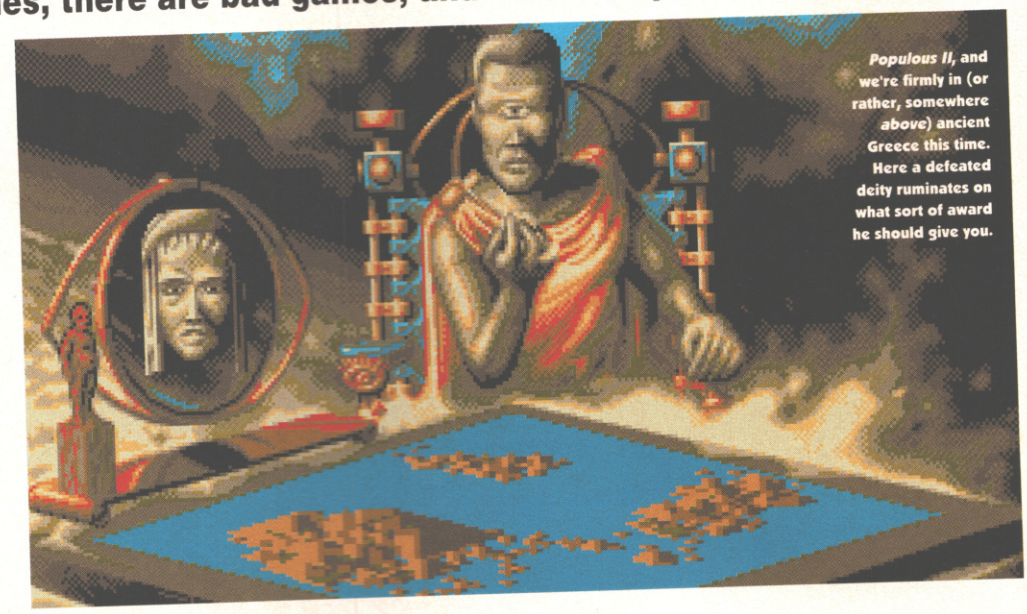
The AMIGA POWER reviewing philosphy is a real doddle to understand, but for those who like things spelt out, here's a brief run down on how it works...

1) We're painfully aware of how much software costs, and believe a game has to be really good to be worth the asking price – there's enough great stuff around for there to be no reason why you should waste your cash on crap. That's why we mark harder and harsher than just about any magazine around – it doesn't always make us friends, but it does tell you whether a game's worth buying...

2) We believe rating systems should be simple and easy to understand. That's why we do ours like we do – one straight mark out of 100, a few summing up sentences, and that's it (except for the odd 'On The Other Hand...' box when a couple of reviewers really disagree about something). Face it – it's all you need.

There are good games, there are bad games, and there's *Populous II*. Years in the ming,

Game: Populous II
Publisher: Bullfrog (Electronic Arts)
Authors: Peter Molyneux, Glenn Corpes, Gary Carr and others at Bullfrog
Price: £29.99
Release date: 1 meg version out now, half meg to follow after Christmas.



***Populous II*, and we're firmly in (or rather, somewhere *above*) ancient Greece this time. Here a defeated deity ruminates on what sort of award he should give you.**

POPULOUS

It's hard to know quite how to approach a game like *Populous II*. It is, after all, the sequel to arguably the most celebrated and original Amiga game ever, and lots of you will know exactly what it's all about, have a fair idea of how it works, and really just want to know out of a review is if it's any good or not. To impatient *Populous* fans with thirty quid burning a hole in their pockets then: yes, it's excellent, go out and buy it now.

For the rest of us, however – especially those who've not had their Amigas more than a year or so – some explanation is in order. *Populous II* – like its parent – is one of those games that sounds incredibly complicated when you try to explain it, but is (a few of the more sophisticated subtleties aside) remarkably easy to play. It is, in essence, an extremely action packed and varied strategy game, but one with a twist – instead of playing some earthbound general, stuck up on a mountain top somewhere directing the flow of battle, you play god.

This isn't God mind you, but merely *a* god – ancient greek this time (in the first *Populous* the time period and religion were unspecific) – with one clear mission in mind, to make his people the dominant race on the map. In each world scenario – and there are a thousand in the game – the randomly computer generated map places two settlements on the landscape: blue guys (that's your lot) and red ones (boo!) who worship one of a series of rival deitys. The game evolves as a battle of wits between yourself and the rival god, the people on the map below mere pawns in your conflicting schemes of things.

"For once £30 for a game doesn't seem a bit steep but an unbelievable bargain"

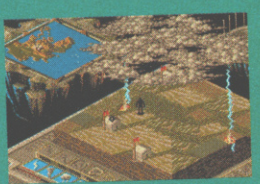
Being gods there are, of course, hundreds of god-like things each of you can do to try and destroy the other's people – thrown thunderstorms at them, or whirlwinds, or tidal waves – but equally important is building up the strength of your own worshipers. The most important basic way of doing that is to give them enough flat land to expand onto – settlements can only grow on plains – which you do by raising and lowering the ground around them. It really *is* as easily said as done – select an area of land with the mouse cursor and one button lowers it, the other raises it, in no time at all creating a nice flat plain. Already you'll see new settlements crop up and existing ones expand as your little computer people get to the business of (ahem) breeding – each

SPECIAL EFFECTS *Or god-like powers (and how to use them)*

Much of the fun of both *Populous* games comes from experimenting with your god-like powers to find new and interesting ways to be nasty to all the little people. Peter Molyneux – *Populous* creator – is acutely aware of the fact, and has made sure all your old favourites are back, plus a good selection of interesting newies...

Column Of Fire
These move randomly across the countryside, setting alight anything in their paths. However, they *will* head towards high ground – here one is stuck on a small hill and looks set to harmlessly burn itself out.

Whirlwind
This doesn't actually hurt people, but picks them up and scatters them about the landscape, disarming them as it does so. Even nastier, it creates a whirlpool when over water which will eat its way into the land.



Lightning Storm
Burns people and houses with bolts of lightning. Hard to direct, and many people will just shrug their shoulders and walk away from weaker bursts. (Having said that, the little guy here looks pretty charred).

Earthquake
Easy to control, but equally easy to clear up – you just have to place fresh land on top of the holes. You can't deny it's excellent at swallowing up people and buildings though.

...the ming, sequel to you-know-what, it's obviously 'good' – *how* good's the real question...

THE WORLD...

...is quite clearly your oyster (or whatever else you might want it to be) when you're a god. There's such a lot going on here it takes some getting your mind around, so if you're sitting comfortably...

Your scanner thingie, showing the overall map. The little arrows around the edge help you scroll your way around the whole thing, loosely based on the Greek islands (at a guess).

Hard-to-see black crows (or whatever they are) indicate these guys have got the plague. Mucho problems all round really!

Your people (the little blue ones) and theirs – neither side are doing too well at the moment, but (oh dear) it looks like the baddies are winning!

Lumme! What are *they* doing here? Lots of little blue men in the middle of this red settlement (plus assorted heroes, Papal Magnets and the like) mean we've got a big fight on our hands. Come on the blues! (Ahem).

A baptismal font – it'll convert to the other side anyone foolish enough to step into it.

One of the enemy houses. The style and size depends on how much flat land it's got surrounding it, while the little flag at the side shows how full it is. In a few more minutes this one will be full and someone will set out in search of a fresh, empty plot to build on.

Each of these icons selects a certain range of effects – fire based ones, air ones and so on – the specifics of which appear in the row below.

One of the little enemy men running around looking for a suitable bit of flat land to build on. Each bloke represents a couple of hundred or so.

A whole bundle of secondary controls – this lot don't actually create effects or anything, but *do* allow you to muck about with Papal Magnets and so on.

time a house gets full up (shown by the height of the blue flag outside) a person leaves and starts a new one, though you can speed things up by clicking on the roofs of houses to get people to leave before they're totally full. In no time at all you'll get quite a nifty city building up, at which point it might be worth popping over to the other side of the map to see how your opponent's doing – happily, the computer god you're put up against in the early games is crap at creating flat land, so you should be able beat him on sheer weight of numbers alone.

Still, let's assume this is a half-way decent god we're up against. Over there the situation will probably be quite similar to your own – a number of settlements building up, his numbers increasing and so on. (You can check out how well the two of you are doing by looking at the people in the stadium on the top right of your screen). Time to do some damage, quite clearly – it's in the myriad ways that you can wreak destruction on your opponent's people that much of *Populous II*'s appeal comes. As a beginner god you're fairly limited in the number and power of disasters you can control – abilities build up as you defeat more and more opponents, each rival god grudgingly allowing you a smidgeon of experience as reward for having beaten him – but there's still a fair range available, and a lot you can do with each one.

Take the column of fire, for instance – you can set one of these going in the middle of the enemy's town, and watch as it burns up any houses or little people foolish enough to get in its way. →

Rain Of Fire
A devestating effect, causing a whole swarm of fireballs to drop from the sky onto houses and so on. Don't forget your umbrella!

City Walls
Not so much a special effect as a very man-made defense against the same. They *can* be destroyed, but they'll helpfully prevent the raising and lowering of land around them, say, and plenty of other things too.

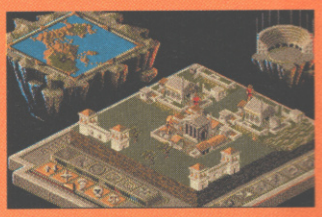
Basalt
This horrible looking sludgy thing is basalt, volcanic rock which you can't grow anything on, but can be used to form useful bridges and so on. (Not very exciting looking though, is it?)

Baptismal Font
An interesting one – it creates magical wells in the ground which convert anyone who falls into them to your side (unless it's some of your folk who do the falling, of course!).

Fungus
Gives anyone who falls into it a deadly disease. Whether your fungus fades away, remains stable or spreads like wildfire over the countryside depends on the pattern you put it down in.

THOSE POPULOUS 1 & 2 DIFFERENCES IN FULL

Graphics
Broadly similar – there's still the isometric 3D scrolling centre section, but the 'book' effect of the first game map has gone in favour of a slightly less obtrusive 'islands floating in the void' look. Layout of icons makes a bit more logical sense, and you can now swap between the normal view and a (slightly slower) full screen look at will. Actual in-game graphics are far faster, more detailed and more varied too – with the new adoption of an actual historical time period giving them more cohesiveness too.



The new game: cleaner backgrounds, simple controls, and much, much faster

Gameplay
Again, the basic idea is the same, but there's far more to the new game. The custom game option is new for a start, but there are more worlds, more varied enemy gods and far (far) more in the way of special effects to play with. The whole thing moves that much faster too – "like it's been written by a real programmer this time, instead of a dustbin man" says creator Peter Molyneux – and the vastly increased number of effects makes for more varity in gameplay (less emphasis on merely raising and lowering land) and a much more spectacular visual look.

"The most important point though'" says Molyneux, "is that every effect you use is now much more of a double-edged sword – sometimes it will, or can be made to, hurt your own people as much as the other fella's. It's a more frantic game."

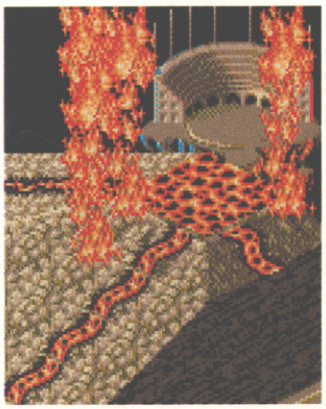
The first game: fussier icons, slower updates, 'interesting' book effect

A good day to stay indoors, obviously! Here we crater the enemy village green with a heavy shower of fireballs.

Unfortunately, columns of fire are fairly unpredictable – you can't decide with any accuracy exactly where it's going to ignite, or what direction it'll move in once you've got it going – and there *is* an easy defense against them. If the defending god sets up a mountain nearby, the fire will head towards it (it's drawn towards high land) where it'll eventually fizzle out. Learning defenses and counter-measures to enemy attacks is much of the skill of *Populous*, but so is finding new ways of mixing your own aggressive abilities for more devestating effect – a lone column of fire won't be half as effective as one dropped on a largely wooded area, for instance, where it'll create a raging forest fire. (You might be wise to plant a few trees on enemy soil before you use one, in fact).

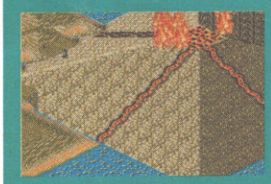
And that, in its basic form, is the game. Yes, it can get incredibly complicated – when things are going wrong you often find yourself caught up in desperate fire fighting attempts, running frantically around the map trying to save what's left of your people, while at the same time attempting to attack your enemy (and hopefully cause him enough problems to create yourself some breathing space). That the number and power of effects you can generate is directly dictated by the amount of manna (a product of the happiness and numbers of your people) you possess means that when things go wrong they go very wrong – you'll be hard pushed to counter a volcano, say, when you've only got three hut-loads of people left, and they're obviously not at their most relaxed and spiritual when there's white-hot lava bubbling through the carpet! It can be an incredibly frustrating, tear-your-hair-out experience – but then, it's meant to be. Happily things are paced beautifully, so how well you do against each god dictates just how tough the next scenario will be – when you're in trouble it's because you've mucked things up, not because the game's being incredibly unfair to you. If there's one thing *Populous II* boasts, it's a lovely learning curve – progress is just

"It's just about the closest computer games have come to a genuine competitive sport"



Volcano: about as destructive as they come, perhaps, but easily capped with a swift bit of land raising.

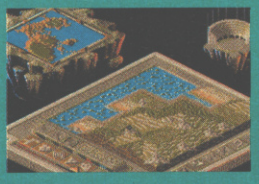
SPECIAL EFFECTS



Volcano
A powerful effect, sending streams of lava over the countryside, sweeping men, buildings, and even Papal Magnets away, rendering the land underneath infertile.

Tidal Wave
Moves in all four directions and swallows up anything at ground level – pretty impossible to stop, unless it comes across land that's too high for it.

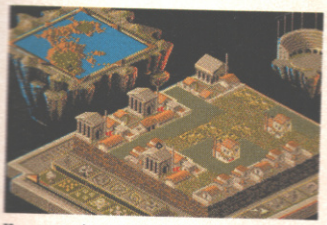
Whirlpool
Very powerful – eats its way into the land like nobody's business (that house looks a bit precarious, for instance). It's unwise to go swimming when one of these is around too!



Pimple Rocks
Makes a scattered growth of rocks spring up out of the ground, leaving it useless for building on (or anything very much at all, really).

Plague
Hard to see here, but one of the most powerful effects, setting a contagious disease – marked by black crows flying overhead – amongst the enemy people. Makes them infertile too.

For alternative *Populous* fun, you can try playing it *Sim City* style, just building up interesting looking settlements...



Your enemies at the start of the game. Much flat land, but not much building going on for some reason.

tough enough to keep you guessing, just easy enough to make every new opponent seem at least potentially beatable.

But hold it a minute! Describing things in terms of progress through the game does this no favours at all – it makes *Populous II* sound like something with set levels, set ways of solving puzzles, set objectives and a finite end. It isn't. Perhaps this is one reason why many people respect *Populous* but have never *actually* played it, why so many reviews of it are so unfocussed and woolly as soon as they've got past the 'you play a god' bit. Perhaps it's easiest to think of most computer games as a set series of puzzles linked together – there's an argument to say thay're not actually true 'games' at all. There's always a 'right' way to do it, whether that be by working out the correct route in an FRP game or the exact correct split second to move your joystick in a shoot-'em-up – it's practice that makes perfect to a large extent, rather than skill.

Populous isn't like that – it's more like chess, or football, or running around shooting paintball pellets at people in a forest, or any other 'real' game you happen to fancy. By that, I mean it forms a game structure with various things you're allowed to do and various things you can't – what happens within those constraints is really up to you. You can solve any one 'problem' – defeating a certain rival god – in a so-close-to-infinite-it's-not-worth-counting number of ways, such are the number of effects and tactics you can juggle. And things are even more open when you take on a human opponent (through linked machines) – it's just about the closest computer games have come to a genuine competitive sport, head-to-head flight sims perhaps excepted.

New to *Populous II* is this (slower scrolling) alternative full screen view, giving you a better overall idea of what's going on.

And that – more than any of the slick programming, or the spectacular visuals, or the very rightness of the whole idea – is what makes it a dead cert as one of the few games it'd ever be worth the bother of taking to a desert island with you. You wouldn't ever complete it as such, and even if you got tired of it after a while, you could guarantee you'd be reaching for it again eventually – it's just not the sort of game you'll never fully exhaust the possibilities of.

When you add to that the resurgence of interest that's bound to happen when Bullfrog get around to releasing the inevitable Worlds disks (ideas currently being kicked around include a Norse gods disk or an Egyptian gods one – though the fact that Bullfrog claim not to know the first thing about either culture, coupled with the wait we've had for the *Powermonger* disk, makes us suspect it'll be later rather than sooner), you've got a game that people won't just be playing for the next six months, but for years to come.

Yes, existing *Populous* fans may balk a bit at the idea that *Populous II* is in many ways just *Populous 1* writ large, not genuinely a new game at all (though every component that goes towards making it up is new), and the more dedicated arcade heads might find it a little bit too cold blooded to be interesting (their loss), but the fact remains that there'll be few better ways to spend your time this Christmas. For once £30 for a game doesn't seem a bit steep (or worse) but an unbelievable bargain, and you can't really praise it much more than that.

● *MATT BIELBY*

UPPERS Where do I start? Pleasing graphics, variety, surprises, brilliant pacing, a wealth of things to do and see – and all in service of one of computer gaming's few true original ideas, this time remoulded and polished until it shines. A classic.

DOWNERS The same basic game design as *Populous* – some people may not fancy coughing up for essentially the same thing twice. Still vaguely woolly sounding when described – sadly, many folk will simply assume it's not the thing for them.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A pure computer game – it couldn't even begin to work in any other medium – presented with wit and skill and imagination, while all the time laudably aware that it's first task is being fun to play. An action game for strategy fans, a strategy game for arcade junkies, and, until *Populous III* comes along, unmissable.

93 PERCENT

CONQUEST GAME/CUSTOM GAME – YOU DECIDE!

Populous II *can be played in one of two ways...*

The Conquest Game.

This is the way of playing *Pop II* outlined in the body text – your task in life is to manipulate your people so that they defeat (in fact, entirely wipe out!) the other people on the map, provoking the rival god (who influenced their actions) into giving you the gift of more experience. There are 1000 progressively harder worlds to try your hand at, controlled by 32 Greek gods.

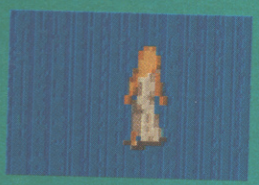
The Custom Game

The same basic game, but you can make up the rules of the conflict before you start. You can change the abilities of your opponent (or indeed yourself) too, weighing things heavily in one of your favours. Alternatively, you can balance it so your task is to try and create a nice environment for your people to flourish in (*Sim City*-style) rather than defeat any baddie. The choice, as they say, is yours...

Forest
One of various 'green' effects, it plants lots of (quick-growing trees). These can be good or bad – they make your people happy (hence more manna), but can be a big fire hazard!

Papal Magnet
Indicated by this, erm, thingie, you place it on the map and then watch your leader (and if you want, all your other little people) head for it. Sounds crap, but can prove very useful indeed.

Hercules
The little man you can just about see in this pic is Hercules, one of the strongest of your heroes. Turn you leader into him and he'll run about all over the place breaking enemy heads. Beware though – he's pretty stupid...



Aphrodite
Alternatively though, you may prefer this 'comely' wench. Pied Piper-style, she'll lead a whole trail of men (and even women, such are her charms!) to their doom, by the simple act of walking into the sea...

... and this little lot are just the start! Not only are there loads more effects and abilities available to you, you can combine two or more to create interesting new disasters. Beware though – the enemy can quite easily turn your own attacks against you! Everything's much more double edged in this new game...

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INDIANA JONES & THE LAST CRUSADE

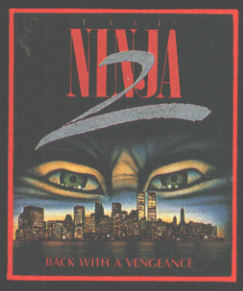
■Play out Indy's greatest moments of danger and triumph in this blockbusting game.Fight off the enemy, dodge hazards and search for valuable objects in your quest for the world's most precious treasure – The Holy Grail.

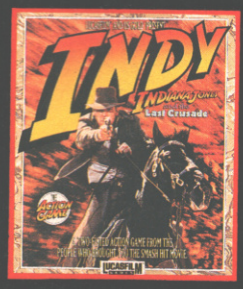
STRIDER II

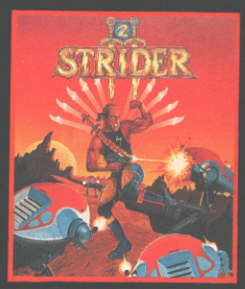
■Strider's armed to the teeth and back with a vengeance. His task – to rescue an important world leader kidnapped by aliens. If his legendary aerobatic ability and swordsmanship are not enough to get you through level after level of action, a blast from his devastating high-velocity gyro laser gun may just do the trick.

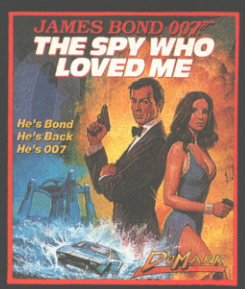
JAMES BOND THE SPY WHO LOVED ME

■James Bond stars in a classic action-packed race against time to save the world from the crazed and power mad Karl Stromberg. With one-to-one arcade style shoot-outs, multi-level action and top secret codes to crack, this is the fastest paced and most exciting Bond thriller to date.









DOMARK

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Helpline Tel: +44(0)81 780 2224 Between hours 1.30-4.30 pm (UK time).

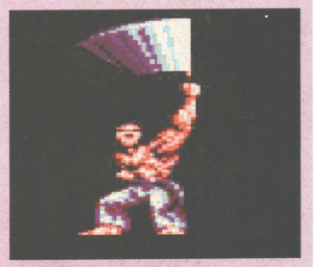
BUSTIN' MOVES

Our hero is one seriously athletic dude, as this series of top action shots show...

Just your everyday, run-of-the-mill all purpose jumping slash manoeuvre.

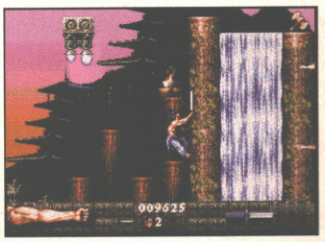
But don't forget the long-reaching reverse chop for those rear nasties...

...from either side, of course!



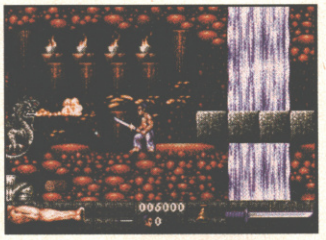
Avoid bird-dropping misery with this classic overhead swat jobbie.

Swords? Who needs 'em anyway?



One of the major Level One obstacles is the waterfall, which at first seems nigh-on impossible due to the two dragons guarding the base – lateral thinking time.

Arachnophobes will quiver at the sight of this section of the first world, but don't panic! Slashing away at the floor blocks will keep the eight-legged meanies at bay.



Down the well on the first level you'll find the first of the special items required to complete the stage, guarded by a fire-breathing dragon. Timing is the key here.

Game: First Samurai
Publisher: Vivid Image (Mirrorsoft)
Authors: Raffaele Cecco, Teoman Irmak (graphics), Nick Jones (sound)
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

FIRST S

If you're going to do something, you may as

As the great Jane Austen once wrote – "I do not want people to be very agreeable, as it saves me the trouble of liking them a great deal."

Such could well be the philosophy of your average samurai, and it's especially applicable in the case of the unfortunate chap featured in this game. After witnessing the death of his master (Lord Akira, cartoon apocalypse movie fans) and entire village at the hands of an evil wizard and barely surviving the attack himself, the young warrior enlists the aid of the gods and the wizard is banished to the far future. This isn't enough for the samurai, though, and he follows the murderer to the 21st century, hell-bent on revenge and prepared to slaughter anyone who gets in his way. Hey, did someone say the word 'slaughter'? Sounds like a cue for a computer game...

First Samurai (the title is a dig at System 3's *Last Ninja* series), sees the player take on the not unfamiliar guise of a musclebound bonehead with a grudge, with a mission to hack and slash his way through (in this case) ten levels of arcade adventure-style violence. The game structure is distinctly suggestive of Renegade's *Gods* with a touch of Gremlin's *Switchblade 2* thrown in, and isn't really anything to get worked up about, but as you've undoubtedly already looked at the end of the review and noticed the huge mark, you'll be wanting to know what it is that distinguishes this game from the hundreds of bog-standard chop-'em-ups already in existence. The answer is a simple one, and should be engraved in stone above the door of every software house in the country - "If you're going to do it, do it *properly*".

"Mediocrity has been an accepted standard for too long"

I don't know about you, but I'm sick to death of some of the half-arsed attempts at full-price professional games certain software houses expect the public to fork out upwards of £26 a time for. The over-riding theme seems to be, far too often, 'oh well, it's *good enough*', which is a myth perpetuated by sycophants and idiots in the magazine world who are old enough to know better. Mediocrity has been an accepted standard for too long – there's no such thing as 'good enough'. It's all or nothing as far as I'm concerned – either you've got the pride and integrity to work at a game until it's as near to perfect as it can feasibly be, or you've got no business expecting it to sell a single copy. We see maybe 500 games a year at AMIGA POWER, and of those perhaps fifteen are truly worth paying the asking price for. *First Samurai* is one of them. Why? It's been done properly.

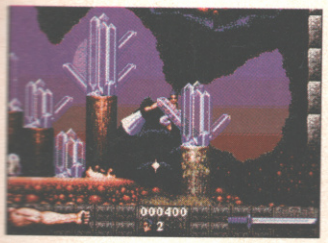
DOWN TO BUSINESS

From the opening sequence to the final battle, this game drips quality. Beautiful graphics, huge levels, superb presentation, instinctive control, magnificent sound and above all, attention to detail. There are no sudden unexplained jumps between different worlds, no 'Loading Level Two' messages to wreck the atmosphere (there's practically no loading at all, as it happens, but I'll get to that in a minute), no cop-out reliance on invisible dangers, in fact nothing at all to get in the way of the pure enjoyment of the game. As I've said there's nothing too out-of-the-ordinary in the game's design – it's an arcade

Level Two, and the most noticeable additions are the pillboxes from which enemy thugs pour in their hundreds – for some unknown reason one of them seems to be impersonating a Cossack dancer, but not for long...

Level Three, and the samurai finds himself in a maze full of crystals (not to mention spikes, flames and deadly pits). Richard O'Brien, though, is nowhere to be found, and our hero slashes the air in relief...

The baddies in the fourth level include these rather timid-looking bats. (Well, I think they're bats). Unluckily, our samurai is absolutely terrified of the fluffy little loves, and decides to call on the wizard for help...



As well as a different colour of sky, each new level introduces new scenery features – these crystals are transparent, creating a lovely effect with the parallax backdrop.

There's a potion of some sort in the branches of that tree, but you can't reach it from here – you'll have to drop down on it from above.

From the second level on, you'll often find yourself in underground maze sections like this one, populated by a series of highly unpleasant spike traps.

This big head appears to be made of inanimate rock, but as soon as you hit the ground he comes after you. He's indestructible too, but he can be 'dissuaded'...

T SAMURAI

as well do it properly – that's what we say and (hurrah!) Vivid Image seem to agree!

adventure platform-leaping extravaganza in the same vein as many others. It's probably closest to Gods, but with the best elements of *Switchblade 2* and *Turrican* thrown into the melting pot it eclipses the Bitmaps' hit effortlessly.

ATHEIST'S ALMANAC

Really, this is the game which makes all those reviewers who went into fits of unrestrained ecstasy over the Renegade title look just a little bit ridiculous. For a start, *First Samurai* gives you 10 worlds where *Gods* gave you four, and each of Samurai's levels is several times bigger than any of those in *Gods*. What's more, you get the first four levels in the first load, completely eliminating disk accessing for the first week or so of the average gamer's playing. The other levels come in two blocks of three, each loaded in approximately three seconds while the between-levels bonus is calculated, making the whole business of accessing almost totally invisible.

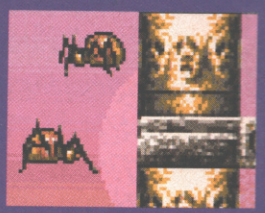
Each level sets you the task of collecting a certain number of special items, but the levels all contain more of the items than you require, so you don't have to complete any stage in a particular set way. Exploration is encouraged and rewarded, and indeed it's even possible to teleport back from a level to the previous one (with, of course, no penalty in hanging around for disk accesses) to search for yet more hidden points and bonuses, or just for the sheer hell of it. The levels come in three dramatically varying graphical styles, and the different areas are linked by two excellent little sub-game-type sections to ensure there's no loss of atmosphere. The graphics themselves are a league beyond *Gods*, bursting with colour and a distinctly console/arcade look, as opposed to *Gods*' dull blue/grey predominance and very 'computer game'-y feel.

Where *First Samurai* really →

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING THERE TO REMIND ME...

Never mnd the clever stuff – deep down, *Samurai* is still the kind of game that slices little babies down the middle and uses the two halves for slippers. Yes, it's positively awash with meanies trying to do you in – like these, in fact...

Yes, it's top Belgian ex-champion cyclist Eddie Mercx, and he's after your blood!



Oh no, it's those spooky spiders again! (Well, they scare the living daylights out of me, anyway).

I'm not quite sure what these are at all, actually. Bats? Birds? Flying lobsters? Who can tell?

In the future, samurai warriors everywhere will be plagued by malevolent motorbike helmets!

The journey into the seething metropolis of Level Six is accomplished by means of a ride on the Bullet Train. Essentially a bonus level, the samurai can still come a cropper if he doesn't keep his energy up.

The city streets of Level Six are infested with, among other things, vicius ninjas armed with shuriken. If our hero's quick, though, he can deflect the shuriken back towards the ninja and give him a taste of his own medicine!

Levels Six and Seven are set in the city, but long tracts of sewer run beneath both stages. And where you find sewers, you invariably find bare-chested musclebuilders in cycling shorts, don't you?

BIKINI GIRLS WITH SUB-MACHINE-GUNS (DON'T EVEN CONSIDER THINKING ABOUT APPEARING IN THIS GAME!)

The sky is a different colour for every level – not only good for the atmosphere, but helpful for reference if you're teleporting around exploring between levels.

Any bonus weapon you're carrying appears here – you can have daggers, axes, or heat-seeking maces, but only one at a time.

Your health – as you lose energy the arm disappears from the knuckles down.

This space is where the bell for summing the wizard appears – unfortunately, you don't have one at the moment. Wizards, eh? Never around when you need 'em!

Usefully, you can stand on the tree branches – climb up and hide, that's my tip.

The other use of your bushido energy is to charge up these magic pots which are scattered liberally around each level. When you die, you're returned to the last charged up pot along your route.

Bad guys. (Kill them!)

These pill boxes hold a finite numbers of baddies – but it's a big finite numbers...

The sword indicates your bushido enery which goes up when you kill things in close combat if it drops half, you lose your sword, so be careful!

leaves the other game behind, though, is in the field of sound. Hits on enemies are accompanied by dramatic orchestral stabs, the samurai's sword swishes ominously, there's the odd burst of speech, and best of all, when you open a chest or basket full of food or treasure, *First Samurai* erupts into the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's 'Messiah'! The overall feel created by the soundtrack is a glorious, epic one, and it gives the game an atmosphere unlike any I've experienced. Only using effects when something actually happens adds to the dramatic effect greatly, although it does have a small drawback in that when there *isn't* a lot going on the game is entirely silent. This is especially noticeable in the fifth level, where after the constant rumble of the train journey the city streets feel strangely subdued, but since moments where there isn't much happening are few and far between it's not a significant flaw. Certainly it's a small price to pay for such stunning sonics.

STANDING ON ITS OWN TWO FEET

Okay, so it thrashes its closest competitor to within an inch of it's life, but is *First Samurai* still a great game when taken on its own merits? (That's a rhetorical question, by the way). It isn't quite as technically excellent as, say, *F1 Grand Prix*, it doesn't have the simple idiot fun factor of *Rodland*, it lacks the depth of *Cruise For A Corpse*, it hasn't got – bloody hell, who *cares*? This game has been so beautifully and lovingly nurtured that it stands head and shoulders above 98 percent of Amiga games of any kind. It's a joy to play, there's enough of it and enough secrets hidden in it to keep you enthralled for weeks on end, and for once it's been programmed with the gameplayer and not the trainspotter in mind. It looks gorgeous, it sounds amazing, it calls for strategy, planning and careful thought as well as mindless hacking, and it rewards effort admirably with the aid of a unique-code-saving system similar to that employed in *Gods* (but one which works better). There now follows a short summary for the benefit of the short-of-attention-span who always read the last line of a review first because they can't stand the tension. I like this game a lot. ● *STUART CAMPBELL*

"From the opening sequence to the final battle, *First Samurai* drips quality"

UPPERS Gorgeous, original, considered use of sound, enormous playability, and a massive but fair challenge – no cheating with awkward control or stupidly tough enemies here. The game excels in almost every area, but the presentation in particular is really something special.

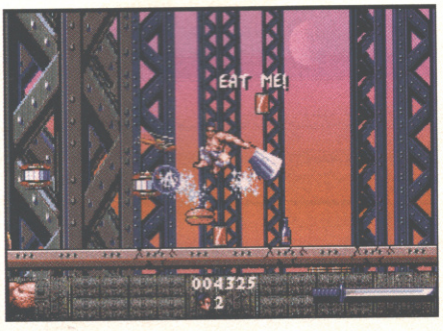
DOWNERS A tiny bit of extra speed wouldn't have hurt, but that's about it.

THE BOTTOM LINE

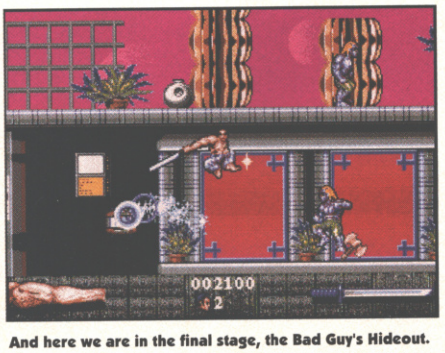
A breath of fresh air brought to a tired genre – one day all games will be written this way – then again, hell might freeze over first. A brilliant game, and an object lesson to programmers everywhere in – yes – How To Do It Properly.

91 PERCENT

Level Eight is the last one set in the decaying conurb, and as you might expect things don't get any easier. The level is particularly notable for the large number of laser barriers which you'll need the wizard's help to pass.



Level Nine is what separates the city from the palace where the evil warlord lurks. It consists of a network of cranes and elevators which require careful negotiation and much James Bond-style derring-do.



And here we are in the final stage, the Bad Guy's Hideout. Vicious zombies try their utmost to stop you retrieving the magic scrolls which will force the warlord to emerge from hiding for the ultimate battle. Good luck...

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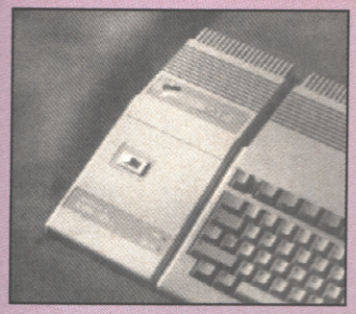

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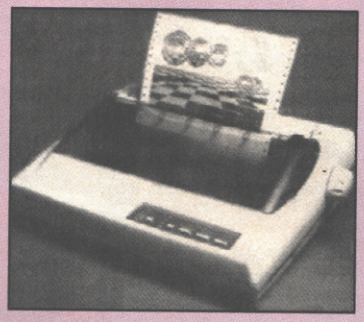

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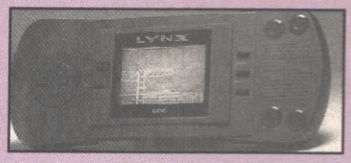

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SUPER SPACE INVADERS

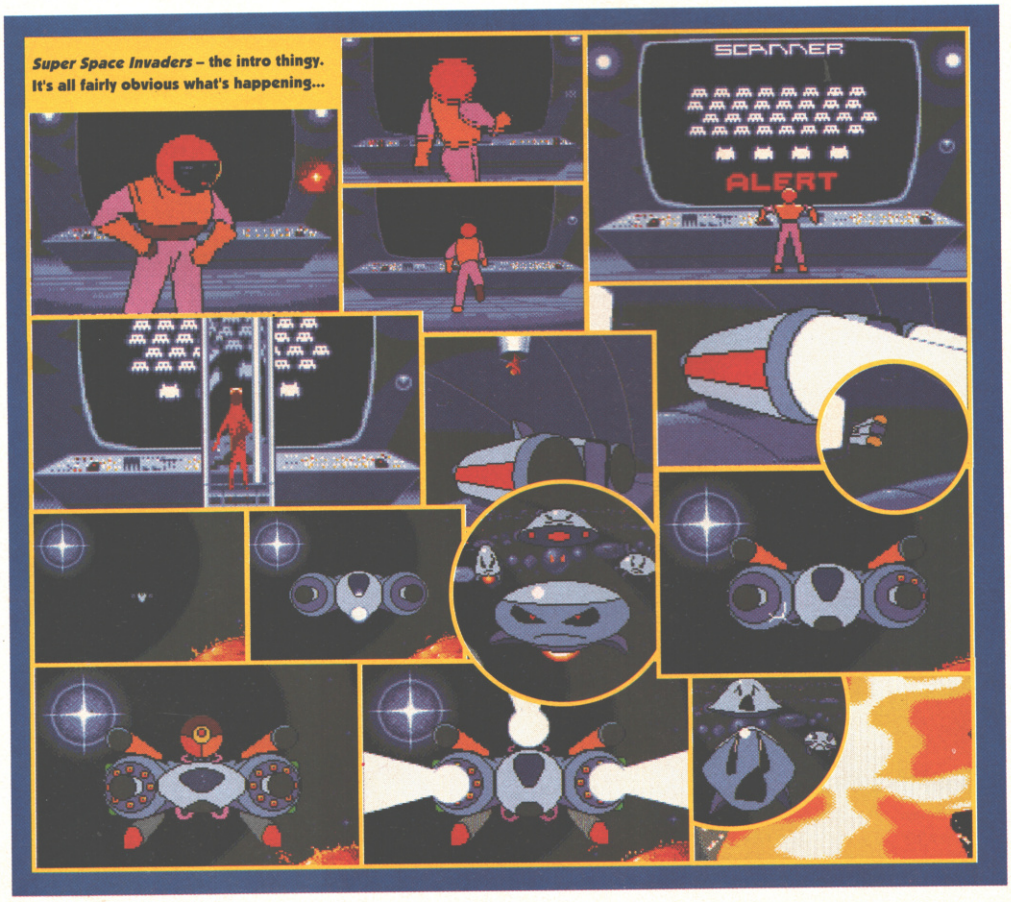
Who'd have thought it – that at the tail end of 1991 we'd find ourselves reviewing *this*, the great grand daddy of all arcade games, once again? But it's happened...

Game: Super Space Invaders
Publisher: Domark
Price: £24.99
Author: M. Margrave and J. Myers at The Kremlin
Release: Out now

It would probably come as a surprise of molecular proportions if I was to tell you that *Super Space Invaders* is, in fact, little more than an up-to-date version of the ancient *Space Invaders* coin-op with all the proverbial knobs on. It would probably come as equally little surprise if I was to tell you that I am currently standing on my head with a small carrot lodged up my left nostril and a pair of Y-Fronts strategically pulled over my head in hope that this will provide me with suitable inspiration to describe what the game involves beyond resorting to the old "all you do is move left and right and shoot things" standby. It hasn't. All that you do in *Super Space Invaders* is move left and right and shoot things.

Even though (as we've just established), all you do is move left and right and shoot things, appropriate modifications would have to be adopted to bring *Space Invaders* up to the standards of the nineties. But what would you, the reader, do if whilst sitting on the loo browsing through this hallowed issue of AMIGA POWER, there was a faint tapping on the door and an anonymous piece of paper slipped onto the carpet informing you that you had to re-write one of the great classics of all time this very instant? Here are a few suggestions:

Obviously, the first thing that could be improved upon on the original are the graphics. The sprites could now be a multitude of animated, colourful evil-looking aliens, they could be of varying shapes, sizes and now even have characters. The backgrounds could now be a plethora of both stationary and scrolling atmospheric scenes – nice pictures of satellites and space stations, say, and both vertically scrolling planet surfaces and horizontally (and parallax)



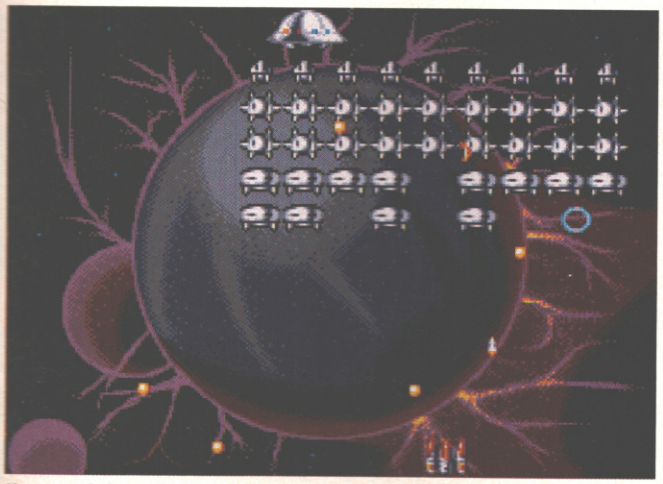
Super Space Invaders **– the intro thingy. It's all fairly obvious what's happening...**

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR TOSHIHIRO NISHIKADO

If one thing's for sure, *Super Space Invaders* owes practically everything to its prequel, *Space Invaders*. Mr Toshihiro Nishikado (now age 47), the brain child behind the original seemed like the man to talk to, so we exclusively copied a bit out of a (dodgy translated) photocopied interview with him...

Ah, Mr Nishihiro. How long did *Invaders* (the original coin-op) take to write? "It took about 10 months for me from planning to finishing the game. I named the game *Space Monster* but it was named *Space Invader* by request of sales section before production."

Erm, sorry, Mr N. It seems that's about all we've got space for.



Neat, rounded metallic aliens *look* fine – they just don't move as well as the real thing.

scrolling space stations is the sort of thing we're after here. And (perhaps most importantly) there could be a pretty animated introduction. A cartoony bloke jumping into a space ship and zooming off into space, zapping a few aliens, would be good.

Sound is another thing that wouldn't say no to a slight updating. Obviously, the traditional "eeaaaaoooowww – explosion" explosion effect would have to stay, but there is plenty of room for improvisation. Possibly some digitised speech, and slightly more convincing crashes and bangs. And some digitised cow samples as well, for good measure.

But have you thought about the movement patterns of the aliens? Moving constantly left, then down, then left, then down and so on? Na, it just wouldn't be on, really. Far more exciting things could happen – aliens could fly away from the pack and swoop maniacally towards you, they could all constantly swirl around the screen or groups of them could swap and change position. And the individual aliens could expand, they could split into two. The possibilities are (theoretically) endless – but don't get carried away. That will probably do.

COWS IN SPACE

Oi! Hands off our cows! This jokey sub-level is a game high point.

Every other time you polish off three waves of aliens, you get a bonus level. Here, you play for points by preventing a field of cows from being taken off into space by UFOs. The UFOs zoom about overhead, snatching cows in their tractor beams – your job is to shoot the UFO and not the cow – resulting in a digitised 'ouch' or 'thank you' depending on whether you succeed.

AND DON'T FORGET THE UFO

Remember that UFO which used to fly across the top of the screen? And when you shot it, you scored lots of points? Boring, eh? If I were you, I'd change the game so that every time one is shot down, a little *Arkanoid*-style capsule will drop down. Collect it within a few seconds and a random power-up will appear with such effects as, oooh I don't know, extra energy, double fire power, the more interesting vertical (and horizontal) laser, whirling fireball things, and explosions.

Oh, and you could have a simultaneous two player mode as well.

And don't forget to put in some end of level baddies.

These are the sort of improvements that could, and spookily have, been made over the original *Invaders*. And in the arcades, they certainly helped make Taito's *Super Space Invaders* a veritable corker. But is the Amiga conversion a corker too? No doubt at least one point during this review (probably about now come to think of it) you've thought "why doesn't he just get on with it" and have impatiently glanced down at the score in the rather ungenerous box at the bottom of the page. In this case you will already know the answer the proposed question. The Amiga version isn't very good, and falls down completely (and utterly) on one factor – speed.

Armed with a handful of 10 pees I ventured down to the local arcade around the corner (and along the road a bit) (and around another corner) to scout out the coin-op. I had a go and was knocked out mainly by its rapidity. Then I went back to the office and (once they let me back in again) settled down again in front of my trusty Amiga. The conversion looked emphatically sluggish in comparison, especially at the beginning of a wave when the screen looks like it is too congested to handle it. As for the aforementioned scrolling backgrounds, tragically jerky and rather hard on the eyes is the best description I can up with. You can't help but feel sorry (but still love) your Amiga for trying though.

Better Dead Than Alien is the only other straight *Invaders* clone I can think of on the Amiga, and to tell the truth, although the arcade game of *Super Invaders* was brilliant, the conversion isn't a patch on it. *BDTA* had more power-ups, a password feature (*SSI* allows you some choice of levels but nothing as effective at keeping your attention) and it was generally a lot more slickly programmed than *Super Invaders*.

Then again, there's the argument that the whole *Space Invaders* gameplay is simply too thin to hold a full price game anymore. There are certainly people in this office who find the methodical left, right, fire experience rather similar to that of painting a rather large wall – and equally interesting – especially at speeds like this. All in all then, it's not really worth the bother. But smile – we don't want to end this review on a bad note, now do we?

● *RICH PELLY*

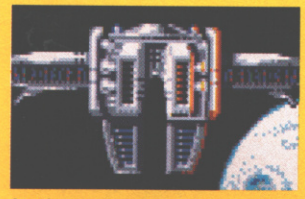
ON THE OTHER HAND...

Okay, so it *is* a little slow compared to the arcade version, but that doesn't make it a bad game. The presentation of Domark's conversion remains sexy and witty, the perfectly simple gameplay still works a treat, and you won't find a two player mode down the arcade. Remember, if it wasn't for the original *Invaders* Rich would be out of a job. 85 percent at least. – *Amanda Cook*

THE END OF LEVEL NASTIES

The mother ship – a real mutha of a ship it is too, flying in a figure of eight. You have to shoot it when its arms are up away from the body.

The split saucer – the protective pod (the bit with spikes on) comes off, leaving it vulnerable from below.



Another mother ship – this one fires missiles at you, then switches tack and tries stars instead. (The bast).

UPPERS Great Intro, nice sound, lots of potential, and initially attractive looking.

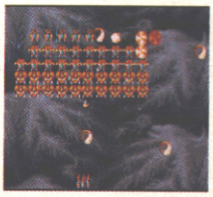
DOWNERS But as far as gameplay is concerned, it's sadly rather crap – far too slow, lacking in variety (unlike the arcade) and technically inept.

THE BOTTOM LINE

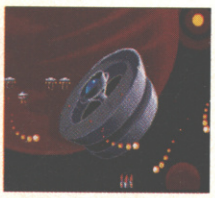
It's *Space Invaders*, it's got knobs on but it's far too slow and, to tell the truth, not worth the bother. A real shame.

51 PERCENT

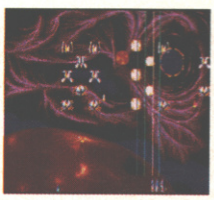
This butterfly prevents the Invaders from moving...



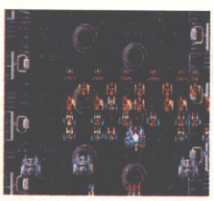
...and here we see the start of a Fire Flower bomb.



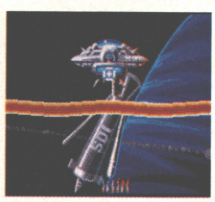
Destroy Beams whizz around the screen...



...while Buster Laser kills any alien in its path.



These bases protect you a la the original game...



...while this Hyper Laser kills a whole row of aliens.

You've seen the cartoon, you've read the comic, you've pe[rhap]s Cartoon Classics version of the game. But now, the *real* t[est]...

CAPTA PLANE

Game: Captain Planet
Publisher: Mindscape
Price: £25.99
Author: Tony Crowther
Release: Out now

Captain Planet. Sounds familiar? Then you're either an avid early-morning cartoon fan, or you're the proud owner of an Amiga 500 Cartoon Classics Pack. If you're the former, then you'll probably feel quite enthusiastic when we tell you that our eco-aware chum and his trusty Planeteers are now the stars of an action-packed, pollution-busting game. If you're one of the latter, and are already acquainted with the pixilated incarnation of our lycra-wearing super-hero, then you're forgiven a slight cringe when you realise that a (slightly) different version of the game is now being sold to innocent Amiga owners at a fairly helfy price...

A PLANET IN THE MAKING

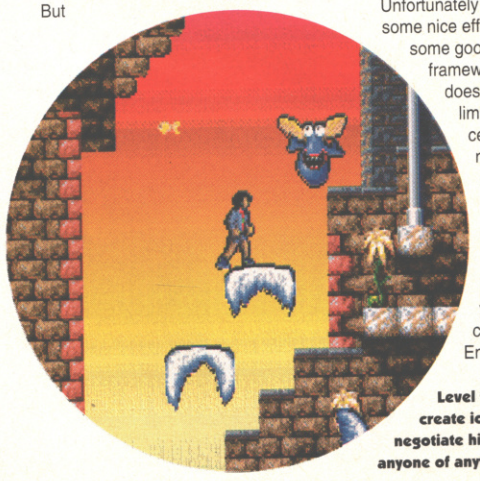
Yes, the version of *Captain Planet* that came bundled with the Cartoon Classics pack was really rather poor – pathetic even. The pretty(ish) graphics were often disturbingly blocky, the animation was appalling and the gameplay frustrating – it was, without doubt, the duffer of the pack. It is with some trepidation, then, that we approach the full price, stand alone version.

But Mindscape are no fools. Hence the new and improved *Captain* swaggers into the fray with promises of improvements, enhancements and a general gameplay overhaul. So let's put the past aside and assess this game as if we'd never seen or heard of it before...

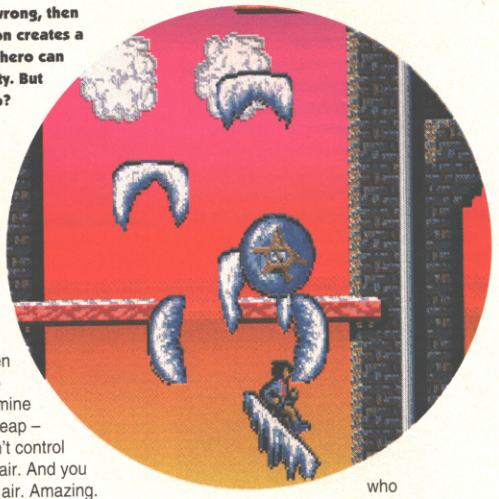
Captain Planet has five buddies (the Planeteers) who have heroically taken it upon themselves to save the Earth from ecological disaster. Each Planeteer has a special power based on the elements – Fire, Water, Wind, Earth or Heart (not quite sure about that one). There are six levels of action, five of which where you play one of the suitably 'tooled-up' Planeteers on an individual mission, then level six which places you in control of the good Captain himself.

The gameplay is essentially a platform shoot-'em-up affair, with each level offering custom gameplay elements inserted to spice up the action. For example, level one not only finishes with a spaceship shoot-'em-up sequence after kicking off as a *Turrican*-style platform blaster, it also encompasses elements of *Mario Bros* along the way as Wheeler (the Planeteer) headbutts blocks to earn points. Level two is strangely reminiscent of *Rainbow Islands* as Gi throws (slowly melting) ice platforms in front of her to aid her passage. You get the idea?

Unfortunately it doesn't work. Despite some nice effects, and the germs of some good ideas, the basic framework of the gameplay doesn't hold up. The limitations placed upon the central character's movement veto any attempts to introduce new, exciting elements. You want illustrations? (You sure?) There are plenty of them. For instance, press up on your joystick and your character leaps. That's it. End of story. The next time you have any influence upon your pixilated pal is when he comes to rest, often a good second or two later. You can't determine his (or her) length of leap – it's standard. You can't control your character in the air. And you can't fire whilst in the air. Amazing. What are Mindscape playing at? Surely this is all basic, standard stuff – as much an essential element within the platform and ladders genre as power-ups are in the shoot-'em-up? Sorry to harp on, but there's really no excuse for what comes across as little more than laziness on the part of the programmers.



Level two and our hero must create ice-platforms if he's to negotiate his way around. Remind anyone of anything?



If it all goes horribly wrong, then pressing the fire-button creates a slide down which our hero can hopefully skid to safety. But what is he trying to do? And how is he to achieve it? And what have all these ice pillars and platforms got to do with rescuing dolphins? (Damned if I know).

Fundamental flaw number two: when you die, your character is reincarnated (lives permitting) at a seemingly random spot close-ish to where you died. OK, but there's no brief period of invincibility, no moment's respite from the monster that previously dealt you such a fatal blow. Hence, before you have a chance to make good your escape, more often that not you die again. Then again. Wallop, wallop, wallop – before you know it, it's all lives lost and game over. Just like that.

Reasons not to buy this game, part three: some of the scenery is seemingly just an illusion – you can't really stand on it at all. Hmmm. Call me old fashioned, but I'd be prepared to argue against anyone who claimed that this provides an extra, exciting feature to the game. I like my backgrounds nice and solid, thank you very much, and anything that looks like it should be standable upon, you should be able to stand on.

And there's more. Take this: walk through a gap, and then immediately try and walk back through it the other way. In a number of places it simply can't be done. Why? It's beyond me...

"there's really no excuse for what comes across as little more than laziness"

So the game is largely unplayable, your character is more often than not uncontrollable and the whole affair is monumentally frustrating. Can anything be salvaged?

PLAYING AROUND WITH ECOLOGY

Well, to some extent, yes. The backgrounds are very pretty. I'm sure the screen-shots look

ve perhaps even played the *real* thing...

IN ET

lovely – don't be fooled, they are at best merely cosmetic, but they do *look* good. The inventive game-plot just manages to hold your attention long enough for the game to develop an addictive hook, too. Despite my frustration with it, I found myself coming back to it a number of times, as the ideas underneath are actually quite neat. Each level is almost a whole game in itself, with a logical(ish) plot dictating the action. Some of the 'special' sequences (the way your ice bridges slowly melt, say) are really quite good. And an ecological theme has to win an extra five percent from any reviewer (spikey-haired Scotsmen excepted).

Still, it's not enough to make this a good product, or even an average one. It's poor. At the end of the day you just can't help thinking about what *Captain Planet* could have been – I'd love nothing more than to give an environmentally sound game a rousing round of applause – but this is too ludicrously executed to make it.

● *NEIL WEST*

UPPERS Promotes ecologically friendliness, encourages care for the environment, stands against damage to the, er, environment, and... is, erm, nice to dolphins! Graphics are okay too.

DOWNERS Frustratingly flawed, largely unplayable and seemingly boshed out as quickly as possible. I'm not sure if it's laziness or just plain crapness, but the game is packed with some of the most ridiculous gameplay gaffs imaginable.

THE BOTTOM LINE

What a shame – I so much wanted *Captain Planet* to be a cracker but really it isn't. Keen environmentalists can ignore graphical deficiencies – and who really needs a good soundtrack anyway? – but unplayability can't be forgiven. Sorry.

43 PERCENT

SEALS IN THE SKY WITH HOT AIR BALLOONS

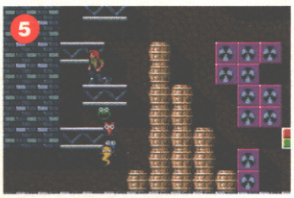
Level one of Captain Planet, and you play the part of Ma-Ti, the "nature-loving teenager from South America". Apart from such Miss World style character references, however, you're not really given that much indication as to what it is you're actually supposed to be doing. Hmm. After a lot of confused wandering around, then, may AMIGA POWER present a complete walk-through guide to level one – stick with it and (flying seals – and are you sure they're seals, not polar beara? – perhaps excepted) it really does all start to make a spooky sort of sense...

First off, any budding environmentalist must select a mission. There are six in all, but the beginning's a good place to start.

Hmm, "Remove toxic waste fix the ozone-layer free the seals". Bit of a tall order. You might as well get on with it...

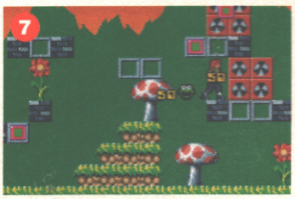
Blast the radioactive blocks and avoid the baddies. You can't crouch but *can* jump in the air to the left or the right.

Dead baddies don't die but instead become goodies. Until you lose a life, these little ghosts will follow you around.



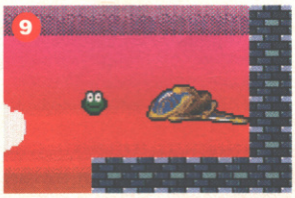
Into the cavern for yet more block-busting action. She's got all five lives left and has earned 5050 points so far.

You see those coloured blocks above her head? Well, if Ma-Ti headbutts them *Super Mario* style...



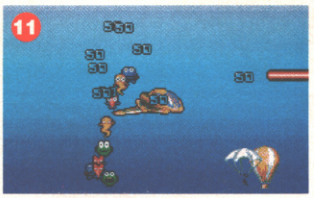
... then she earns even more points! The bottom section of the level is now almost cleared.

When all the blocks have been blasted away, it's time to leap from cloud to cloud until you find your space-cruiser.



Jump into the space-cruiser and now you're airborne. Your little froggy chum is still with you, so you're still earning.

Shoot those balloons! In the multi-coloured sky you'll find them dropping acid rain onto the ozone-layer...



...so shoot them and collect the parachutist who bails out. There's enough wildlife for an impromptu nativity play!

With all other airborne objects destroyed, it's time to talk to nice Mr Ozone who's busy dropping bubbles out of his pipe.

Catch the bubble on top of your ship and fly until you find a hole in the layer. By this point it looks a lot like a tea-bag.

Release the bubble and all ozone in the locality is repaired. Time to go back to see Mr Ozone for a new delivery.

With the layer repaired, the seals (?) in the clouds (!!) can now be encouraged to walk along the ozone to safety (!!?).

Job done. Finito. Adios level one. Well, no one can say that this game lacks 'atmosphere'. (*You're sacked! - Ed*)

A few 'honourable' exceptions aside, there's no such thing as a bad Amiga golf gam

MICR GOLF

PLAYING AROUND

One of the strengths of this game is the amount of variety available. However many chums you've got round and however good (or otherwise) they are, you'll find a game style to suit all occasions...

1 MEDAL (or STROKEPLAY)
This is the standard game for one to four players. You play each of the eighteen holes in turn, and the player with the lowest total score at the end is the winner.

2 SKINS
This is a matchplay game, where each hole is played as an individual contest. In Skins, though, you play for money, with a set stake being entered at the start. The first six holes are then each worth that amount of money, the second six are played for twice the stake, and the final six each net three times the original amount.

3 HEAD-TO-HEAD
Once you've got down to a zero handicap, you can challenge a computer player directly in an 18-hole strokeplay or matchplay contest. If you win you get to take on a more talented opponent.

4 TOURNAMENT
Tournaments are strokeplay games played by pairs (if you're playing by yourself you get a computer partner). There are three levels of competition, taking place over 18, 36 or 72 holes depending on your skill level.

5 SINGLES
A straight two-player matchplay contest, the player winning the most holes being the victor, irrespective of total scores.

6 THREEBALL
18 holes matchplay for three players. Threeball is actually three games at once, with each player competing against each of the other two.

7 FOURBALL
Fourball features four players each playing their own ball (strokeplay or matchplay), but with scoring by partnerships, ie the lowest scores in each pair are marked against each other. In this way players can cover up for each other's mistakes.

8 BESTBALL THREE
This is a curious matchplay game, where three players play in a one-against-two format, with the lower score of the partnership marked against the single player's score for each hole.

9 BESTBALL FOUR
Similar to Bestball Three, but this time the single player is competing against a team of three, using the same scoring system.

10 THREESOME
This can be a strokeplay or matchplay game, where a single player challenges a partnership, but the partnership only actually play one ball, taking alternate shots.

11 FOURSOME
Like threesomes, except that two teams of two compete against each other, both partnerships alternating shots.

Game: MicroProse Golf
Publisher: MicroProse
Authors: Lee Hodgson, Mark Davies
Price: £34.99
Release: Out now

In many ways, and more so than with most other sports, computer golf is the very antithesis of the real thing. Golf is all about getting out into the fresh air, having a leisurely stroll along the course with a chum or two, and socialising convivially in the clubhouse afterwards. It doesn't really matter how good you are, for the average hacker the playing of the game is its own reward. (Contrast this with something like *Kick Off*, where the ordinary gamer has neither the talent nor the opportunity – who's ever got 21 friends all in the mood for a quick kickabout at the same time? – to seriously pursue the real thing, and hence looks to the computer game to give him a flavour of something he'll never experience for real). To play it by yourself in a dark and clammy bedroom, then, is a pretty strange thing for anyone to want to do. Still, it's always a

"For all my nitpicking it's still a highly enjoyable golf sim"

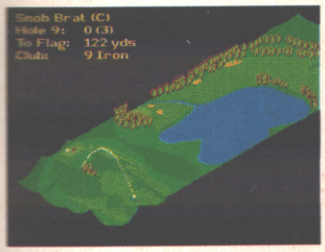
That 'Fog On The Tyne' effect in full – "Ah," thinks our hero in plus-fours, "What a lovely pastoral scene. Time for a shot."

"Tee up, adjust positioning, address ball, wiggle bottom around a bit, and – hey! What's happening over there?"

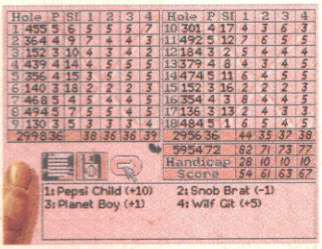
"Bloody hell, where'd everything go? Eeh, when I were a lad, it were all trees around here, and catfood was 20p a tin too..."

...just differing degrees of 'very good'. Could this be the 'very goodest' yet?

ROPROSE



The map screen appears before each hole, and gives you an overview of the whole thing, which can be rotated 90 degrees.



The handicapping system is totally true-to-life, and hence horribly complex. As you can see, though, it can be a great leveller.

A tricky shot behind a tree here – what you really need is a swerve shot, but sadly this isn't *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*.

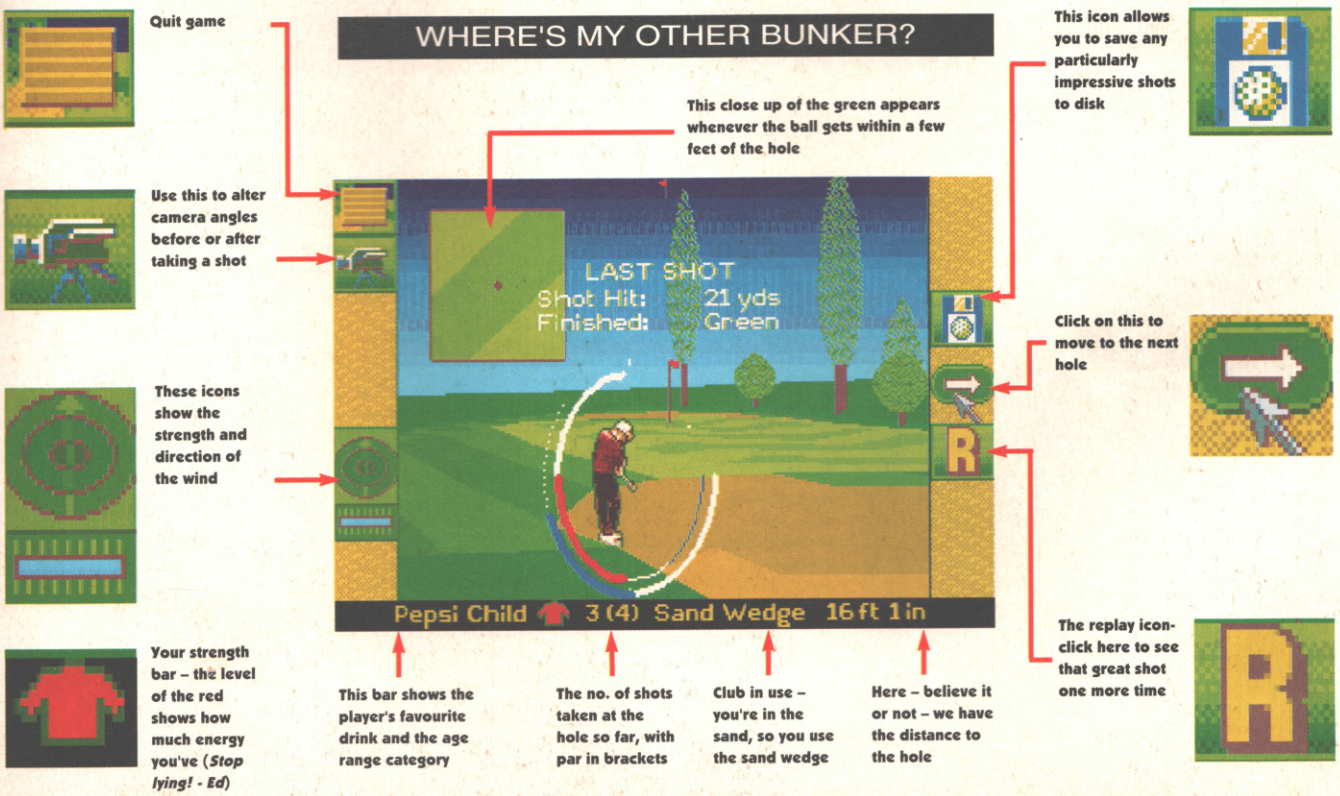
This pic gives you an idea of how well the perspective works – the hole is actually at the bottom of a very steep slope.

popular theme for programmers, which leads me to believe that it's not the fact that a computer game is a simulation of golf *per se* that's important, but that there's something inherently attractive about the basic concept that real golf was developed from in the first place. I'd have thought that this would make total accuracy of simulation the last thing which was really important in a computer golf game (when are we going to see a future sport game based on the pitch'n'putt principle? *Death Golf*, with exploding balls, mines in the rough and snipers in the trees, maybe?

Now that'd be interesting), but nonetheless (surprise!) that's what MicroProse have gone for here, so all that remains to be seen is how good a job they've made of it.

FIRST AND FOREMOST

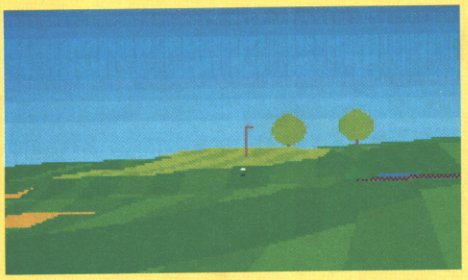
The first thing you're going to notice when you play *MicroProse Golf* (hell of a title, guys) is the stunningly-executed 3D effect. The courses are depicted in vector-graphic contours, and as the ball flies through the air, a camera tracks its progress past rolling hills, across lakes and streams and through clumps of trees in an extremely effective manner (indeed several cameras do, as you can view a shot from any one of five moving angles). It's an impressive thing to witness, but unfortunately the programmers have gotten slightly carried away with it and over-stretched themselves. What I mean by that rather cruel-sounding comment is that when your golfer stands at the tee or wherever, you see a lovely and reasonably detailed panoramic view of the hole ahead as far as the eye can see, but when he goes to actually hit the ball, all but the close foreground is suddenly blanked out by a cloak of light blue. The effect is rather unsettling, as if a particularly thick fog has descended without warning on the course, and it gives you an unwelcome reminder of the limitations of the machine (in much the same way as 'Loading And Decrunching Level Two' messages spoil the atmosphere and flow of many an arcade game). Now you can say that's unavoidable and forgiveable – some people in the office are arguing that angle even as I type – but I don't agree. When I'm playing a computer game, I want to



ANGLE PARK

If you make an especially stunning shot and one view of it just isn't enough, you can replay that classic birdie (or whatever) from any of five different camera angles. You can simply stand on the tee and watch the ball fly away, you can swing round dramatically in best TV style, you can wait at the hole and see the ball coming towards you, or – well, *look*...

This is the most impractical viewpoint – the camera simply stays put behind the player and watches the ball fly off towards the target – if you look closely you can see it at top centre.



This is the standard tracking shot, where the camera follows the path of the ball. Here the ball has just bounced over the creek and is green-bound.

The reverse-angle shot places you just behind where the ball landed (it's a retrospective kind of view) and watches the ball as it flies towards you.

The 'swingcam' camera starts off like the tracker, but gradually swings through 90 degrees, finally ending up perpendicular to the ball's flight path.

Lastly, there's the pan, which in fact works very similarly to the swingcam, except that it turns through 90 degrees rather faster and in the opposite direction.

"There are a few other areas of the game which seem to have been neglected in favour of the spanky graphics"

feel that I'm lost in whatever little world I've entered, and the last thing I want to see is the machine's little cogs and wheels grinding in front of me and dragging everything back to Earth. If the machine isn't up to what you're trying to do, you should forget about it and concentrate on making it perform to ultimate standard that *is* within its capabilities. In such a way are all the best games written – it's why *Rainbow Islands* is brilliant (partly, anyway) and why *Dragon's Lair* is trash.

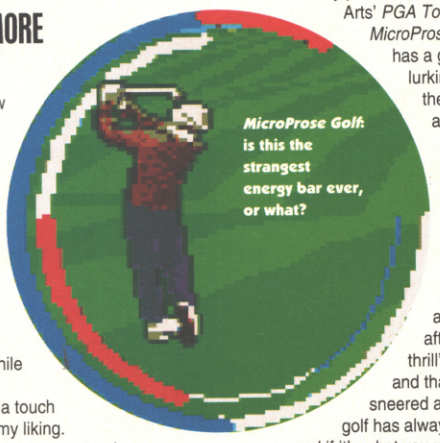
PICKING MORE HOLES

There are a few other areas of the game which seem to have been neglected in favour of the spanky graphics, too. For one, the ball-hitting mechanism, while perfectly serviceable, is a touch over-fussy for my liking. The circular bars are unnatural, and the moving line is too thick for the pixel precision needed for some of the trickier shots you'll be called on to play. Also, the aiming system used on the course map is needlessly confusing and unhelpful – imposing an arc on a forced-3D perspective makes it extremely difficult to know exactly where your ball is hopefully going. (The manual only muddies matters further here with lots of unnecessary waffle about bouncing and rolling and 'optimum' and 'maximum' distances).

It's a pain in the neck, too, to have to keep going back to the map screen when you just want to change your club. In a game drowning in icons, having such a complicated route to one of the simplest tasks seems a little absurd.

In addition, the slopes on some of the greens are a little intangible. Having overlaid the grid lines on the green which seem to show it as flat, it's very disconcerting to watch your ball shoot off six yards to the left of the hole. And finally, the game does so much of the work for you (selecting clubs, aiming at the hole etc), that sometimes the player can feel that he's not exerting much real control over the proceedings.

In fact, after a while, it can seem that all you're actually doing is performing a quick reaction test when taking the shot, and it's the computer that's really doing all the actual golfing!



***MicroProse Golf*: is this the strangest energy bar ever, or what?**

BUT WAIT...

Hang on, though. You might not think it, but I like this game. For all my nitpicking it's still a highly enjoyable golf sim, and the accuracy and depth of options (well, they are MicroProse's strong points) are both painstakingly comprehensive. While it's not quite as gloriously playable or as slickly presented as Electronic Arts' *PGA Tour Golf*, *MicroProse Golf* still has a great game lurking beneath the stunning aesthetics. Many people will buy it purely out of technolust, but for once they'll be getting a decent amount of play after the initial thrill's worn off, and that shouldn't be sneered at. Computer golf has always done well, and if it's what you want you'll have no real complaints about this at all. Having said that though, I'd really like to see what golf is like on the Amiga in two years' time... ●***STUART CAMPBELL***

UPPERS Pretty easy to get into, and the wealth of different games you can play should ensure lasting appeal for months and months. The first time you see it your jaw will drop.

DOWNERS If they couldn't have kept the detail up all the way through, they shouldn't have tantalised us with regular glimpses – do it properly or don't do it at all, that's what I say. The front end is poor, the sound is unimaginative and it can be a little uninvolving overall. Oh, and the price is unforgiveable.

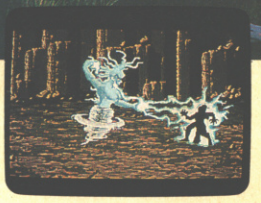
THE BOTTOM LINE

Technically impressive and very playable, but then you'd have to go some to muck up a golf game on that count. Undeniably very good, but for sheer enjoyment it's still got to be *PGA Tour* for me.

84 PERCENT

MOONSTONE

A HARD DAYS KNIGHT



SO MUCH FUN -YOU'LL DIE!

Moonstone - a remarkable combination of fast, aggressive combat action and subtle role-play set in a fantasy world, that uniquely challenges your brain and your reflexes - while covering you in gore.

Oh, by the way, if the sight of so much blood upsets you, don't worry. The blood is an option!

Moonstone features nearly 1,000 frames of incredible animation in 2 Megabytes of monsters and creatures, over 60 beautifully painted backdrops and detailed scenery. Sound effects are high quality digital samples and includes a full musical score and stunning full screen animated introductory and game complete sequences.

12

Moonstone contains scenes of strong graphic imagery with particular realism. Although these scenes are optional, this product is voluntarily rated 12. Parental Guidance is recommended for younger players, however this is not a legal requirement.

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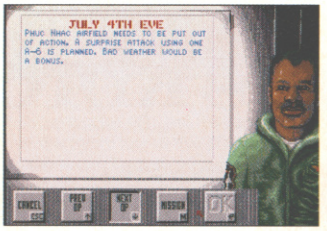
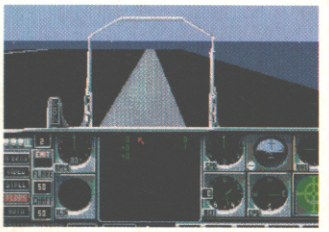
MINDSCAPE

For your local dealer, contact: Mindscape International Ltd, The Coach House, Hooklands Estate, Scaynes Hill, West Sussex RH17 7NG. Tel: 0444 831 761

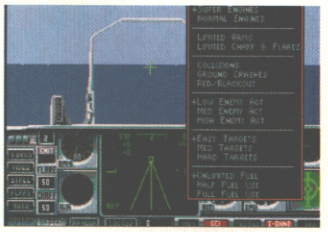
Ready to fly that Intruder? Better load up with some heavy duty weapons first. Hmm, let's see – what's the most destructive?



There's nothing more embarrassing than having to call up your wingman and say: "Crk. Er, where were we supposed to be dropping these?" So pay attention.



Incredible but true: your bulbous Intruder is whisked from 0 to 150 mph in two seconds by your base aircraft carrier's powerful steam catapult.

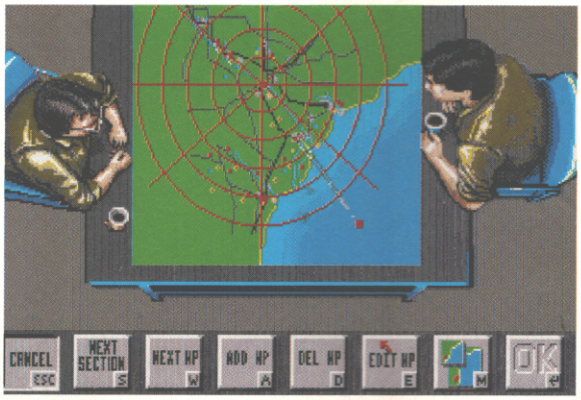


Here's a view from the side, looking out over the sea. The pull-down options menu shows the level of user-definability.

FLIGHT OF THE

It's missed the book by five years, the film by months (and the actual war by a good fif

CAGGED AND BOUND
CAG (according to the glossary in the manual, which runs to ten pages!) stands for Commander Air Group – the chap who plans missions and briefs the pilots. Another of *Flight*'s groovy features is that you can take over this role too, if you like – choosing targets, planning routes and allotting pilots and planes. (Okay, pretty tedious stuff, but the thought's there.) Having sorted out a plan you can either fly on the mission yourself or leave everything to the autopilot.



Game: Flight of the Intruder
Publisher: Spectrum Holobyte (Mirrorsoft)
Price: £30.99
Authors: Rod Hyde and others at Rowan Software for Spectrum HoloByte
Release: Out now

Flight simulations come in all shapes and sizes. There are big ones, small ones, fat ones and thin ones, but there's one thing they've all got in common: they tend to concentrate on fast, sleek, exciting fighter planes. Things like the F-15 and F-16, or futuristic stealth planes. Or at least, they used to. *Flight of the Intruder* simulates the porky, none-too-speedy A-6 Intruder, which is good for little more than dropping bombs on things. You won't catch it dogfighting MiGs against overwhelming odds. Nor, for that matter, is it likely to be seen streaking towards wave after wave of incoming enemy bombers with all guns blazing. No, it likes to do its own thing, the A-6, in its own good time.

IT AIN'T HEAVY, IT'S MY BOMBER

Doesn't sound too promising so far, does it? That's probably because you haven't tried taking in an A-6 a hundred feet off the deck with flak rising on all sides, two MIGs on your tail and your SAM threat indicator flashing like billy-o. I have, and it's no laughing matter. But if you're still not impressed, you may be persuaded to raise an eyebrow slightly if I tell you that Spectrum Holobyte (the same people who brought us *Falcon*) give you the option of trading in your Intruder for an F-4 Phantom, which goes about twice as fast and is a born and bred MiG-killer. (In fact, detail fans, this game hasn't actually been programmed by Spectrum Holobyte in the States, but by sub-contractors Rowan Software here in blighty, the folks behind the Amiga and ST versions of *Falcon*, the *Falcon* mission disks and the upcoming *Reach For The Sky* for Mirrorsoft. Just thought you'd like to know).

"FOTI had me gripped from the moment the steam catapult let rip"

Whichever plane you choose, you're working for the US Navy, and all your missions will be flown from an aircraft carrier anchored off the coast of Vietnam. (It's a Vietnam game). This is where *FOTI* starts getting a bit good. For a start, it's not often you get to perform carrier take-offs and landings in a flight sim. (*Interceptor* is the only other one I can think of, but that's looking a bit crap these days). Even better than that, though, is the way the missions are organised. Up until now most flight sim missions have been solitary affairs – you might have been given a token wingman for company, but he tended to just fly around being a bit useless. In *FOTI* you're part of a team.

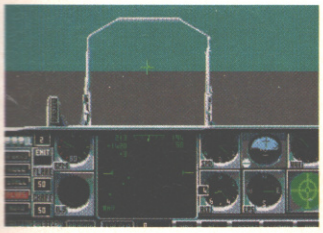
You set off in a massive formation of planes (well, up to eight of them), with Intruders underneath and Phantoms flying above. As you reach the target area, everyone goes off and does their 'thang'. The Intruders bomb things on the ground, and the Phantoms go hairing off after MiGs. Brilliant. Brilliantest of all, though, is that you can swap between the planes on the mission at will. Get bored with bombing things in your Intruder and you can just flick on the autopilot and jump into one of the Phantoms, perhaps in the middle of a dogfight.

Unfortunately every flight begins with a lengthy trek from your carrier to the target area – there's no facility for kicking off any closer. An accelerated time option more or less makes up for this, but it's bound to be picked on by the realism vs enjoyment brigade. Well, they're going to have to lump it, I'm afraid. This is a game that goes for ultra-realism above all else, although I didn't really notice the gameplay suffering because of it. True, just about every key on the keyboard does something – some of them two or three things with the help of Shift and Alternate. And okay, the instruments in your cockpit don't exactly shout out the info you're after. The manual's hopelessly techie and disorganised too. But (but!) you needn't panic. Everything that's in the least bit worrying can be switched off – from the collision detection to your fuel consumption – and you can always let the autopilot take care of the tricky bits until you're feeling up to the job.

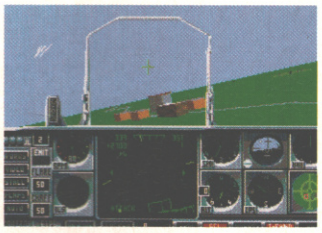
And then there are the graphics. Needless to say they're pretty damn good.

WASN'T THERE A FILM OR SOMETHING?

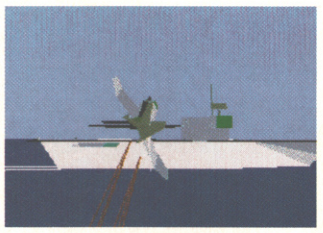
Flight Of The Intruder began life as a best-selling book by a chap called Stephen Coonts about five years ago. The book sold rather well, so a film was made of it. That didn't do terribly well, as just as it was about to be released in this country things started hotting up in the Gulf and the distributors reckoned it would be more tactful to quietly forget about it. It's just come out on video, though, if you fancy watching it, but don't get too excited – it's not very good. There are some spectacular (computer generated? They look too 'clean' to be actually filmed) flight sequences in a 'Platoon meets Top Gun'-style, but the plot is real predictable stuff and actors Danny Glover and Willem Dafoe are given little to do. Avoid.



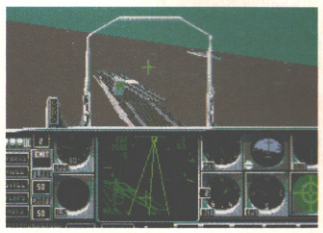
At this point your fighter escort will peel off to sniff out MiGs, leaving you to worry about SAMs, stray bullets, finding your target, and avoiding the ground.



Well, here we are then. What's it to be? Bombs, rockets or missiles? Or all three? (Sounds good to me).



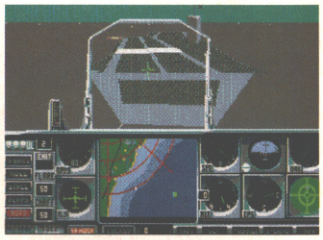
Having missed my target, I'm heading for home. Oh look, there's my aircraft carrier now. Hurrah! (We're seeing this from one of the trendy external views).



And here we are, approaching the carrier. Things start to get pretty hard around this point – landing's always a tricky business, but on a moving platform, well...

E INTRUDER

ood fifteen years!), but – hey! – at least it got here eventually...



This is the trickiest part of all. You've got to catch the hook thingy in the wire stretched across the deck while flying at just the right speed so as not to wreck your plane or sink the carrier. And don't forget to lower your wheels. (As if).

They're a bit lacking in the mountains department (there aren't any, not even crummy pyramid ones), but are fast and beautifully detailed. Where else would you find contrails streaming from your wingtips as you turn, and smoke pouring from your exhausts? And I was impressed to note that the power station I was enlisted to destroy on one occasion actually had doors and windows. It brought a tear to my eye, I'll tell you.

There is, of course, a full battery of 'views': as well as the standard out-of-the-cockpit views (in all directions) there's also a chase-plane view, a fixed external view, a satellite view, a missile view, a target view and a carrier view, all of which can be moved around freely. There are also facilities for recording parts of missions on video and taking photographs, although I haven't quite managed to work them out yet.

You're probably expecting a hefty 'but' around about now, aren't you? Here we go. For a start, the game's not quite as bug-free as one would hope. Strange things happen when you're low-flying (whole buildings lifting themselves into the air, say, and what about the mysterious force which keeps pulling the nose of my Phantom upwards? Perhaps that's just what Phantoms do, but it seems a little odd). These 'quirks' are easily forgiven, but they really shouldn't be there at all.

"It beats everything else hands down on realism"

The other problem you may find is with the limitations imposed upon the game by historical accuracy. The fact that the Intruder's such a dull lump of a plane, the Phantom's lack of a gun making missile-only dogfighting a tricky business, the Rules Of Engagement that mean you can't bomb most SAM sights (!!) because you might kill Russian technicians stationed there – all help with the Vietnam-esque realism of the missions, but limit it rather as a game. Still, that said, *FOTI* had me gripped from the moment the steam catapult let rip. It's one of the most involving flight sims I've come across, giving the real feeling that you're flying a warplane. You can play it as a shoot-'em-up, but the potential's there if you're after something more serious.

THE HIGHEST FLYING SIM AROUND?

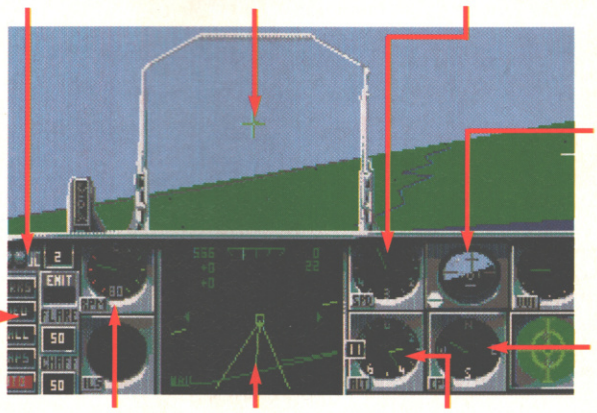
So it's a smashing game, then. But how smashing? This is the bit I've been dreading – the bit where I have to decide where *Flight of the Intruder* stands in the flight sim league table. While it's certainly an advance over *Falcon*, and beats everything else hands down on realism, it's not as instantly playable as *F-15 II* or *Thunderhawk* and needs hours of manual-studying. Very much an enthusiast's game, then.

The fact that it's so thoroughly mucked up its timing as to quite roundly miss even the video release of the associated film has to count against it though, as does the less-than-thrilling flying ability of the A-6 particularly. But look, I don't care. It's that formation flying stuff that really does it for me. I'm going to take a deep breath, shove a stout book down my trousers and say that while it's nowhere near as technically impressive, I enjoyed it at least as much as *F-15 Strike Eagle II*.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*

EYES OF THE INTRUDER

Dials, dials and more dials. That's what faces the pilot. Here's a quick run down on what to expect...



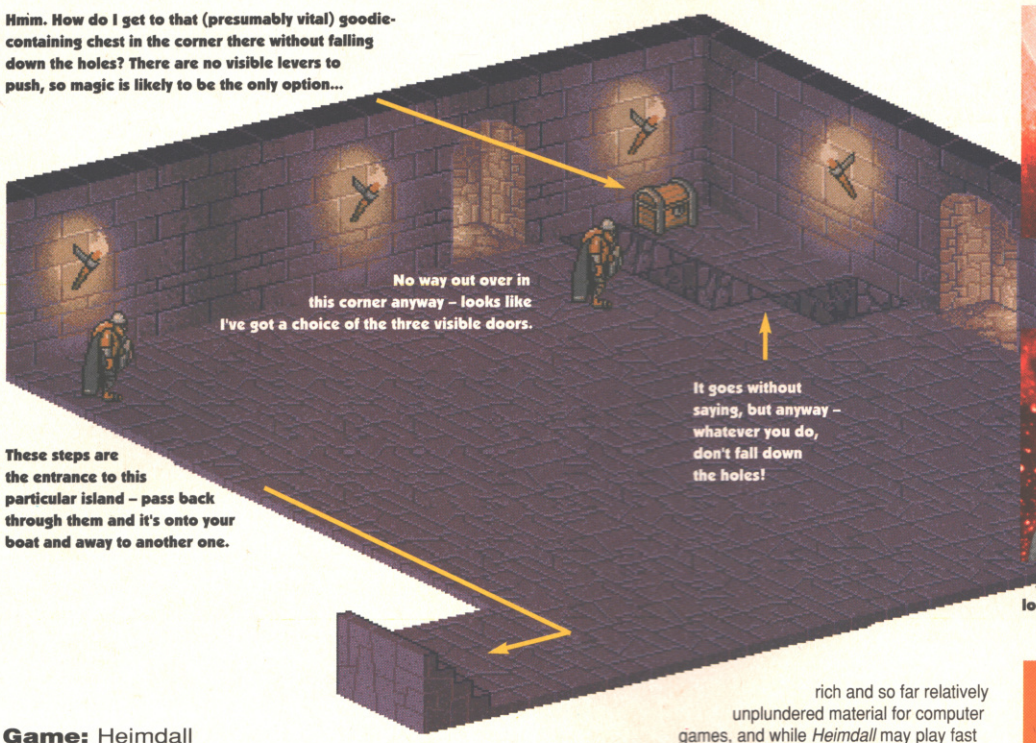
UPPERS Superbly realistic – you'll be talking in a strange accent and pouring yourself a root beer and sasperilla if you don't watch it – and highly flexible, so you can ignore the complicated bits if you want. Great graphics. Reasonable sound effects.

DOWNERS Hundreds and hundreds of controls make it tricky to get to grips with, and a sprinkling of bugs and glitches don't inspire confidence. Not as immediately gripping as some recent flight sims. No sound or plane-swapping on 1/2 meg. Unhelpful manual.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Marvellously absorbing stuff. Not the most accomplished flight sim, but atmospheric as anything. And you can link two computers so one of you can fly an Intruder, the other his wingman in a Phantom. Great stuff.

83 PERCENT



Wow! Talk about gorgeous...

... it's that the graphics tie in so nicely with the look of the game. This doesn't come across...

HE

Game: Heimdall
Publisher: Core Design
Price: £30.99 (one meg version only)
Authors: Ged Keveney and Jerr O'Carroll of The 8th Day
Release: Out now

Since *Space Ace* et al

This is, perhaps more than anything, the game to really put Core Design on the map. As something to actually play it's good but really rather unremarkable – an arcade adventure in the purest sense, featuring much walking around of rooms, collecting objects to use, solving of little puzzles and fighting the various creatures you come across. Some of the puzzles are good, some are rather annoying, and while generally the gameplay is well paced and designed, it has an "mm, that's quite good" quality about it rather than anything that'll knock you dead. Imagine a simpler, more arcade-friendly *Cadaver* and you'll be in the right territory. The fairly hefty amount of disk swapping tends to muck up how smoothly it plays too – without a second disk drive this could turn out to be a bit of a pain in the neck.

But of course, as one look at these pages will have told you, this isn't really a game that stands and falls on its gameplay anyway. It has that demo-like "Golly, look what my Amiga can do quality" – if anyone's still inviting sorry 8-bit Spec-chums or the like around to "show them what a real computer can do" this is one of the games you want to boast with. More than anything, it's graphically reminicent of those spectacular Don Bluth efforts (*Space Ace* et al), but with a proper game attached too – for Core this easily eclipses *Thunderhawk* as the most interesting, "Hey, look, we're doing games that are as good as anyone's" product they've ever done.

Of course, there's good reason for all that Don Bluth-ness – dropping his name was no accidental comment on my part. Graphic artist Jerr O'Carroll spent time working in Ireland at the Bluth studios on some of their feature length cartoons (All Good Dogs Go To Heaven et al) and you can see a cartoonist's sensibility at work in the graphics here – heavy black outlines to the characters, bright colours, stylised figures (all big feet, gangly limbs and 'characterful' ways of walking), and interestingly lit backdrops. If there's been a prettier Amiga game released this year I don't think I've seen it.

To be fair, though I described the gameplay as unremarkable earlier, I wouldn't for the life of me want to give the impression that it doesn't *work* – this is more than just a spectacular graphics exercise. There's lots of it for a start – three massive worlds comprising of fifteen or so islands each, each built up of countless rooms. It's not something you'll be in any danger of completing for quite some time. The general level of care and attention to detail put into the project is supremely impressive too – if the puzzling isn't quite of the standard you'll find in some of the old Ultimate games, say, the new FRP element, the addition of interesting sub-games, and the overall correct feel of the project make it equally as satisfying. The Norse myths provide rich and so far relatively unplundered material for computer games, and while *Heimdall* may play fast and loose with some of the details, the spirit of it all is handled well. It provides a coherent background and atmosphere to the game that similar scale projects from the likes of Psygnosis (with their could-be-anybody barbarian heroes) have rather lacked.

"If there's been a prettier Amiga game released this year I don't think I've seen it"

BUT WHO'S THIS HEIMDALL ANYWAY?

But who, you're probably asking by now, is Heimdall anyway? Well those of you who know your Marvel comics will have some idea – he's one of the more important of the Norse gods, though traditionally a fairly limited one. In The Mighty Thor comics, as in legend, his job was to guard Asgard (the home of the gods) from attack, which he did by standing on the Rainbow Bridge leading to earth, where his especially keen eyes could keep a watch on things below. A bit of a boring idea really – the ancient equivalent of Alan Tracey, the dull one in Thunderbirds who got to sit in the space station all the time listening to radio messages – and happily thrown completely out of the window for the game. The new idea, says Jerr O'Carroll, is that Heimdall has been born of a virgin on earth in a sort of semi-mortal state – Ragnarok (the twilight of the gods, when the evil forces of Norse mythology gang up on Asgard, and everything is destroyed) is coming, and the gods need to recover various lost weapons for the battle ahead.

Loki, god of mischief, has hidden the sword of Odin, the hammer of Thor and the spear of Frey around the three worlds of Norse mythology (we'll get onto what those are in a bit) – it's up to the newly human Heimdall to recover them. "You're right, this isn't really what happened in the Norse legends at all," admits Jerr, " though to be honest we've found there are so many different versions it's hard to know what's definitive at all. The real reason we chose Heimdall to be our lead character is because we saw him in a book and liked the sound of his name."

The actual game itself then. It's a 3D isometric arcade adventure spiced up with a light-weight FRP element. The FRP comes from the fact that you're treking around with a party of characters. Heimdall's quest takes himself and a group of five from island to island in search of the missing weapons – on each island you get to select which two will escort Heimdall as you search around the place, while the rest wait aboard ship.

Walking around the island you only get to see the one guy – the character you've got selected – which initially seems like a bit of a shame, though the excellent animation this has allowed for more than makes up for it. Your hero (whover you've got selected at the time) stalks around the place very purposefully, very characterfully and very – yes! – cartoonily, the animation working just as well whatever angle you're seeing him from. It's certainly enough to make the main hero of *Cadaver* look like

... this intro sequence has to be *the* one to beat. It's not just that things are pretty either, oh no...

... as something just added on. (And blimey, missus! We know what you've been doing!)

ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY? THEN WE'LL BEGIN...

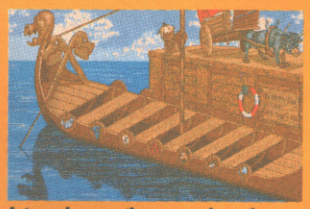
... but not before we've made our way through the strength-earning sub-games. First up is the Axe Throwing Contest, where you, as the young and not-used-to-his-beer Heimdall, find yourself roped into a pub contest – a barmaid has been put in the stocks, and you have to cut the eight pig-tails holding her there with your throwing axes to free her. Unfortunately you're drunk, so the cursor wobbles all over the place – it's very easy to use all ten of your axes without severing more than two or three plaits (in the interests of good taste, the spectacularly bloody head-splattering that featured in early versions of the game if one of your axes hit her face has been omitted from the finished thing – a sensible move, but really a bit of a shame).

Next comes Pig Catching – you've got to run after a slippery, greased pig and hopefully catch it within the short time limit, your score dictated by how quickly you do it. Beware though – if you corner the pig it will turn around and charge at you, knocking you head over heels and wasting valuable time.

Finally there's the Longboat Fight – you must run down the middle of the ship, dodging or fighting armed guards, in the hope of collecting the sack of coins tied to the bow. Once again, time is of the essence.

Intro game one: it wasn't easy being a barmaid in ancient Norway!

Intro game two: they really knew how to make their own fun in those days!



Intro sub game three: run along the boat pushing over lots of little blokes

HEIMDALL

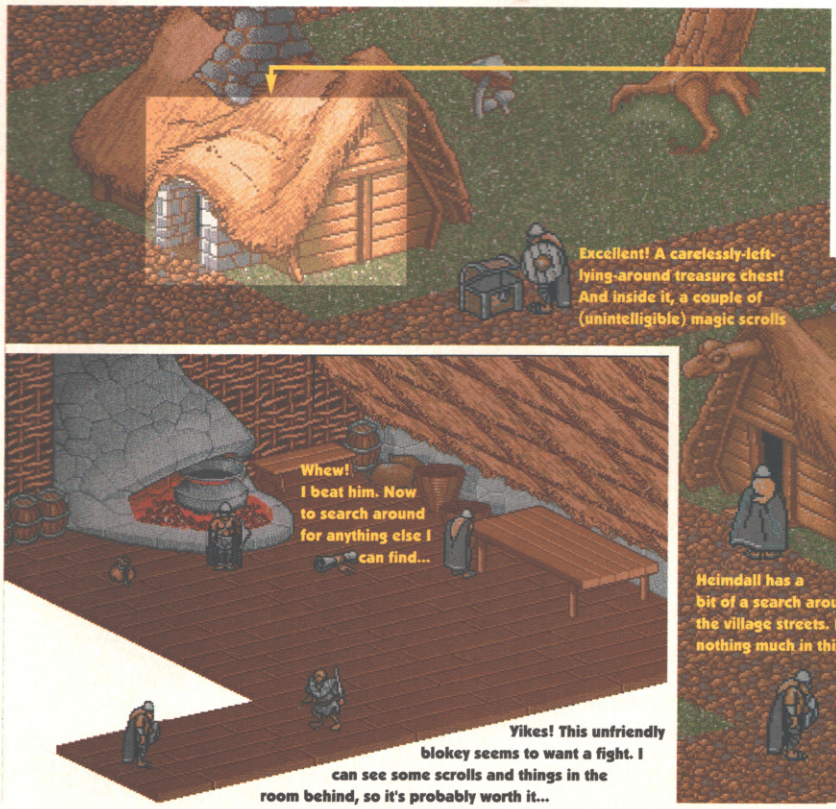
this is what we've been waiting for – animation-quality graphics with added game!

Midgard, the world of men: you start bottom left, Thor's hammer is top right...

the awkward, ugly, rather bodged job he was. That the memory taken up by this animation appears also to have prevented any of the baddies from moving (save for jumping up and down on the spot) is more of a shame, though (beyond creating a sense of reality) it's hard to see what real improvement their running around the rooms would have made, especially when the game uses the FRP-style combat system seen here (see seperate box).

ONE INTO FIVE WILL GO

Heimdall comes on a mammoth five disks, the first containing a rather gorgeous animated intro sequence to set the scene (see another box) – it's well worth watching, but as far as the actual game's concerned we can safely ignore it. Onto the next disk then, and we get a character selection screen where you have to pick the crew you wish to accompany →



DICE THROWING? HIT POINTS? WHO NEEDS 'EM?

Heimdall **uses a bizarre combat system using mucho frantic mouse clicking. Sounds odd, but it works...**

Fighting the baddies is an interesting affair. You get into a fight situation whenever you approach one closely, at which point things flick to the battle screen (which helpfully allows for the possibility of running away). This presents you with an animated picture of the hostile character, a number of energy bars (for the baddie and for your three characters) made up of a neat slooshing blood effect, and a series of icons. You'll have to click on your attack method (fist, the stronger sword, any special spells or weapons you may wish to use) and then the attack icon to inflict damage on him – most commonly you'll only be able to hurt him when his defenses are down because he's lunging forward to attack you. The whole thing consists of much frantic mouse-clicking then, and *does* succeed in representing the FRP hit points idea in a more physically involving way quite well.

Your enemy – here you see him recoiling from your blow. You judge when to hit by his own actions, gunfighter-style.

Over here you see the sloshing blood of your enemy's power levels. (As you can see, this guy's nearly a gonner).

The power of you – Heimdall – and your two companions, all looking quite healthy at the mo.

Attack. Erm, says it all really. (And the spell option underneath is hardly any more cryptic).

Your defend icon for warding off attacks. The one underneath is fairly self-explanatory too!

This sword cursor is your control. As you can see, I'm about to click on the more powerful of my two attack options, then quickly whizz over to the attack icon to actually land the blow.

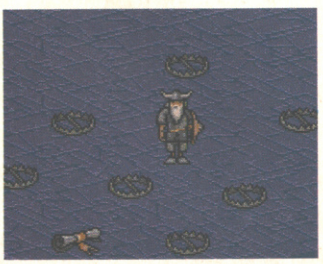
Heimdall from a number on offer – there are warriors, druids, shipwrights, navigators and the like, and you obviously want to go around with a good selection of types.

Before you actually do any chosing though, there's a series of three quick sub-games to get through (see another box) – how well you do on these not only determines the personal attributes of your lead character Heimdall (strength, agility, health etc) but how many potential crew members you get to chose between (if you do well you may be able to pick from all 30; not so well and many of the better ones will be denied to you).

And so to the main game. For each world you are given a map – you kick off in Midgard (or Earth), where Thor's hammer is hidden, before moving onto Utgard (the world of giants) and finally Asgard itself, home of the gods, for Odin's sword.

ISLAND HOPPING AGAIN

All three worlds are made up of a series of islands – you and your people can set sail for any of them you like, but beware: some are a lot more than four days or so's sailing away, and by the time you get there you'll be so weak you'll probably get killed by the first traps you come across. Far better, instead, to island hop in nice easy stages – that way you'll to be able to collect lots of spells, weapons and things that'll prove useful in your quest, as well as build up rune law, character experience points and so on that'll prove useful in your quest. The way things are structured there are a number of sub quests you'll have to manage before you get to the chance to recover any one weapon anyway, and a fair amount of travelling back and forth between islands is likely to prove essential.



Yikes! This room's a real mantrap!

All of which, pretty much, leads us to the actual day-to-day business of playing the game itself. This is a mixture or exploring rooms – things are big enough that some map making would prove very useful – collecting items (chests hold food, coins, better weapons and scrolls which contain spells of various sorts), working out puzzles (often of the 'if pressing block A shuts the first pit, and pressing block C opens the second pit, what will pressing blocks C and B do?' variety) and even solving simple riddle-ettes. There are some bits here that Stuart Campbell and those of a similar persuasion will hate – invisible traps opening up beneath your feet to kill your character, say – which means there are plenty of times when you'll only learn what to do or not to do from experience. To my mind this is a legitimate piece of games design, but if you're the sort of person who'll get frustrated by it then, well, you're in for a very frustrating time.

How well you get on with the rest of it really depends on how patient and methodical you are. Some of the more frustrating puzzle elements – there was one vast maze section which took most people hours to complete – have been removed but you could still find yourself running around one small island collecting bits and pieces but being unable to find the way out for ages. The importance of keeping one magic using character safe is obvious – if you've only a couple of dumb berserker-types they may be unable to read the very rune spell which would show the way out!

"It's a game that surprises, occasionally stuns"

Basically then, a supremely ambitious and well thought out project, breaking new ground with the visuals, and coupling them to a perfectly absorbing and acceptible isometric arcade adventure (and there are far too few of these on the Amiga). This is a game Core are obviously very pleased with, and they've really every right to be. It looks excellent, it proves to be very playable, there's a vast amount of it, and the presentation and general thinking behind it is spot on. If there's too much disk accessing, and a fair amount of plodding about, well, they're a fair price to play. It's a game that surprises, occasionally stuns – just check out the graphic when you (finally!) manage to recover Thor's hammer at the end of the first section, for instance! – and is sure to be Top 100 bound when we update the damn thing next spring.

● *MATT BIELBY*

UPPERS The gorgeous graphics are obvious, but the lush animation, effective FRP elements, interesting puzzles, vast size and general assured sense of character and place are less so. They're all here in abundance though.

DOWNERS A fair amount of dull old disk swapping; some limitations caused by lack of memory presumably – the repetition of the same character graphic for a number of characters, the rooting-to-the-spot of baddies etc.

THE BOTTOM LINE

An excellent looking product that succeeds once again at what Core are proving best at – taking an involved and complex game-type and making a faster moving, more user friendly and lovely looking, erm, thingie, out of it.

86 PERCENT

Look out - he's back!

PAPERBOY 2

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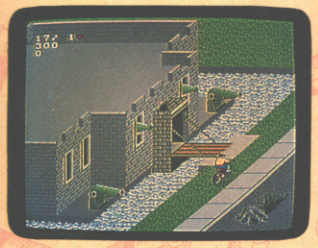
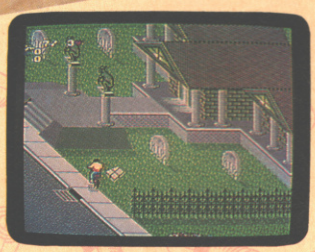
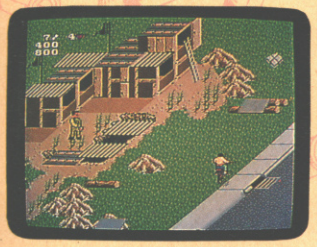
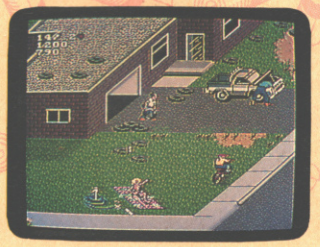
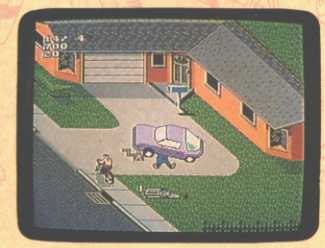
Plus, rad stunt riding and BMX tracks in bonus rounds. Choose to ride as either Paperboy or Papergirl too!











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MINDSCAPE

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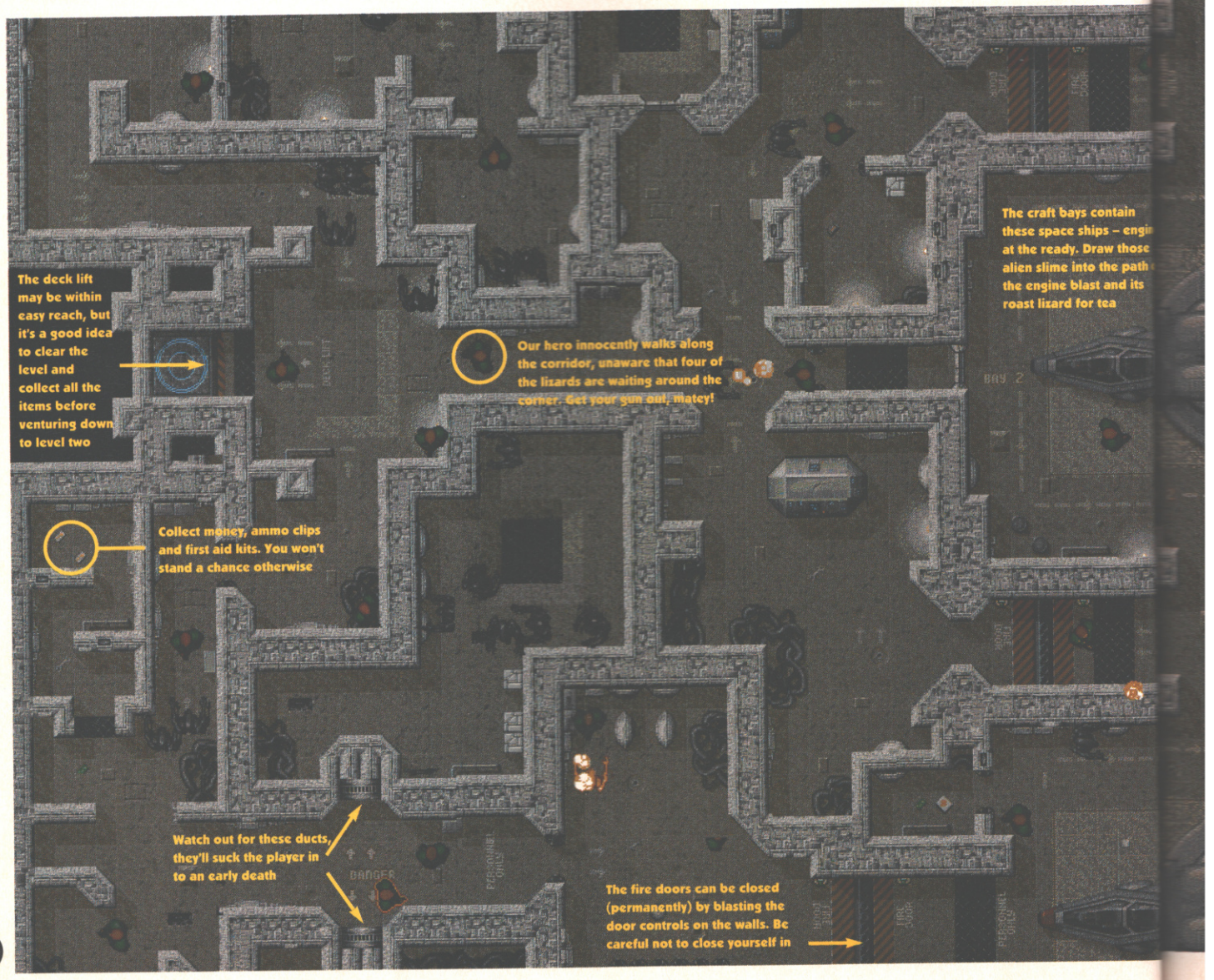
ALIEN BREED

Take the basic idea behind the game *Gauntlet*, dress it up in in the style and trappings of t



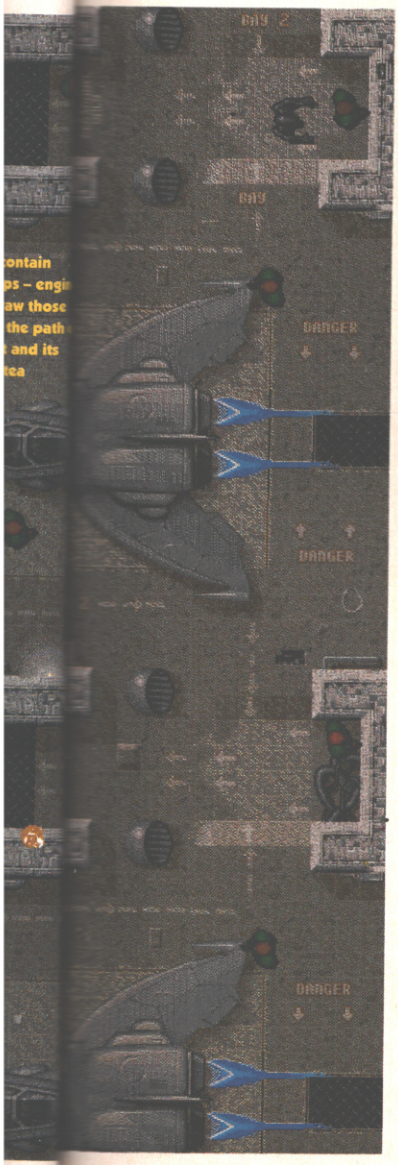
Game: Alien Breed
Publisher: Team 17 (Seventeen Bit Software)
Price: £24.99
Authors: Andreas Tadic, Peter Tuleby
Release: Out now

OK. The instructions have been conscientiously surveyed, the story disk has been politely sat through and *Alien Breed* is loading up for the first time. From your newly acquired understanding of the scenario all that can be deduced is that you, as player one, are stepping into the ominous shoes of a character called Johnson, your player-two type chum from across the road is taking the role of a bloke called Stone, and you are fictitiously winging your heroic way to Intex Space Research Centre Number 4 (ISRC-4) not quite knowing, both in and out of the plot, what to expect. What will you find there? What do you have to do once you've got there? And indeed, *exactly* what type of game are you playing? The story disk and instruction booklet set the scene nicely but are more than a little cagey about actually revealing anything of any use, such as ooooh, what you actually have to do. For all you know, you could be just about to dive innocently into a two-player *Gauntlet*-style overhead shoot-'em-up where you have to shoot lots of aliens and accomplish a particular task per level. And what do you know..?

Flying somewhat rebelliously in the face of convention, I am now going to (shock horror) start talking about the graphics this early in the review. You never know, I might even score some points (or get a pay rise) for originality. You see, graphic-wise *Alien Breed* ranks far above 'quite good'. Miles above in fact. As opposed to walking around on a large void (as in *Gauntlet*), here a smoothly scrolling floor actually exists with, if you look carefully, seemingly helpful messages scrawled on it pointing you in what one hopes is the right direction. And there is relief too (of the bumps to walk over and – on later levels– ducts to traipse along kind); just one of the nice touches liberally sprinkled throughout the game. The sprites are excellently drawn too; both your own characters who waddle along convincingly and the aliens (who bear an uncanny resemblance to the monsters from Aliens the film) who give a sadistically satisfying orange glow when shot.

Ironically, the authors suggest in the blurb that when producing *Alien Breed* their aim was to come up with something which wouldn't look out of place in an arcade – I would venture to suggest that they have come as near as feasibly possible to succeeding. They also suggest connecting your Amiga to a hi-fi and playing in the dark for that added atmospheric touch. It worked – the eerie rumblings and digitised FX (including speech) had me hiding underneath the duvet in sheer terror at times (I was playing in bed as I couldn't be bothered to get up yet). In fact, if the authors had suggested that gameplay would be enhanced yet further by playing in the nude with your left foot in a bowl of custard, then I would probably have done that as well.

pings of the movie Aliens, add a couple of clever, never-before-seen ideas, and what have you got..?



BUT WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU HAVE TO DO, THEN?

One of the more innovative angles on the gameplay of *Alien Breed* is that you are never quite sure of your ultimate goal – each level plays as a separate mission unravelling a little more of your final objective as you go. Level one is more of a warm-up providing a taster of what's in store than anything – you have to simply get from A to B (where A is outside your ship, and B is the deck lift). No problem, as this is simply a matter of walking directly left, although it would be a handy idea to wander around a bit to try to pocket extra ammo, keys and credits (for purchasing equipment) in advance for subsequent levels too.

Righty ho, then, and off to level two. This involves C (the deck lift) and D (the core computer) with you feverishly attempting to get from the aforementioned C to D, initialise D, then return hastily back to C again before D explodes. The map is large but (as in all levels) divided into zones; pass through them in order to reach the computer in zone six. This is yet another well thought out touch to the game – you can wander round completely lost, but at least you know when you are making progress, and when the levels become more familiar, quicker routes can be found. Also making an appearance are one way doors which, you guessed it, only let the player through in one direction and which, unlike normal doors, require no key to unlock them, whilst fire doors shut permanently if shot at.

BUT IS IT ANY GOOD?

A good question. And one I intend to answer in something not a million miles away from a specially expanded version of the The Bottom Line box thingie.

GOOD POINTS

● The graphics and sound are highly commendable, as already mentioned. So in that case we, er, don't need to mention them again.

"very, very atmospheric"

● The game is very, very atmospheric, and full of sneakily clever pieces of programming which almost subconsciously help to hold your attention. Once the core computer has been reached in level two, the screen glows red, a computerised voice announces "destruction is imminent" and you have one minute to scoot back to the deck lift. Yikes! No one told you this before – or else you would have made a note of the route back. But next time...

● Something that the majority of games suffer from is that early levels become a hassle and having to plough your way through them each time does not exactly increase your overall enjoyment. Not so here. Completing a level most certainly does not mean that you have fully explored it, leaving large proportions of the maze not checked. Next time you visit it there will be plenty of opportunities to look round for extra goodies to pick up.

● So *Alien Breed* is a shoot-'em-up, it's a maze game, but one thing that has ceased to be mentioned until now is that there is also a strategic element to it. Credits can be picked up during the game and spent after logging into one of the Intex system computers to be found regularly during each level, But what do you spend it on? Extra ammo? Or perhaps you want to buy a more effective weapon? And do you get it now, or do you save up and buy something else (perhaps something even bigger and better) in a minute? (If you last that long, that is). Decisions, decisions, decisions.

BAD POINTS

● It's a bit too tricky, as the shoot-'em-up elements of the game aren't balanced in the player's favour. The baddies have to be repeatedly shot – it's not a case of one shot to kill – and this does not quite seem to suit. The introduction of destructible alien generators would have helped because, as it is, aliens appear indefinitely which is extremely annoying.

● In a frustrating number of cases I found myself trapped with no keys, and not enough cash to buy my way out and hence (rather monotonously) was forced to spend considerable time just killing for cash. And in two player mode, the players can become separated from each other by doors with nothing that can be done about it, for which there really is no excuse.

AND TO SUM UP

Alien Breed is far from being an original concept, but it has been executed with such flair and excitement and so many new ideas that all accusations of unoriginality pale into insignificance. And as ever, the fun squillion-druples if a friend joins in thanks to all the usual reasons, including the fact that it actually becomes a lot easier to play.

From a highly personal point of view, I liked *Alien Breed* a lot, but it is probably not the sort of game that would appeal to absolutely everyone. As mentioned, it is very tricky and plays a lot less randomly than other *Gauntlet*-esque shoot-'em-ups; the layout of each level has to be committed to memory as the map provided is not entirely useful. This may seem like a hassle at first, but it helps give the game a far greater feeling of realism and – yes – desperation than we're used to. *Alien Breed* is one of those games that – once you've got stuck into – you're likely to be playing for some considerable length of time. ● ***RICH PELLEY***

UPPERS Outstanding graphics and sound, lots to do, familiar *Gauntlet*-gameplay given a number of new twists, and bags of atmosphere. In fact, this could just be one of the most atmospheric games ever.

DOWNERS It's a bit hard, and in that annoying way which slightly deters you from wanting to play it any more. And it may be partially lacking in ridiculously instant appeal.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A very sophisticated game exploiting the ability of the Amiga to its fullest in both looks and gameplay (it's one meg only, incidentally) and proves to be great fun to play – especially with two players. Team 17, ex-PD people, have got the visual side and basic ideas spot on – they just need to work now on making their games ever so slightly less exasperating.

82 PERCENT

Unashamed *Kick Off*

RUGBY WORLD

Game: Rugby: The World Cup
Publisher: Domark
Authors: Walking Circles
Price: £24.99
Availability: Out now

Me and my pal Duncan are a bit sports mad, so whenever there's a big soccer match or athletics tournament on the telly, we usually get a few beers in and cheer on our favourites. These are always good natured affairs, except perhaps when our beloved nations (England and Scotland) collide.

When a good sports game comes out on the Amiga it's much the same, except these are never, ever good-natured encounters – or at least, they aren't when the sports game in question is actually *any good*. Thus far, only *Kick Off 2*, *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*, and *Rugby: The World Cup*, have qualified as the sort of games that really get our competitive spirit burning, and, it has to be said, when playing the last in that list – the one reviewed here – things have degenerated from healthy sporting tussle through thinly-veiled hostility to virtual war. Yes, as a two player game, *Rugby: The World Cup* has been a Godsend.

It's deliciously rare that you come across a game that retains enough challenge to make you desperate to be good enough to beat your opponents, and when one does come along it should be savoured. *Rugby* will have you practicing in private for those (perhaps rare) chances you'll get to out-wit and out-play your mates in the flesh (as it were), and in that respect this is a sports similation in the truest sense of the phrase – the sort of game that, if you weren't doing it in the comfort of your own home with the minimum of physical effort (actually, that's not quite true – this does demand more sweat that your average sports sim, as we'll see) might almost qualify as sport *per se*.

"The most appealing aspect is the way it has captured the spirit of the real game"

Rugby: The World Cup is ridiculously fast, and for a computer game that uses characters the size of under-developed termites, stupendously violent. Here is a game that is as exhilarating as it is knackering – half an hour with this chunk of silicon chicanery, and you'll be sweating like, well, like a fifteen stone rugby player.

So what makes it so astonishingly appealing? Well, as you'll have gathered from screen-shots and pre-release hype, *Rugby: The World Cup* is an unashamed rip-off of the *Kick Off* style of sports simulation. If the programming team Walking Circles had been commissioned to copy Anco's style, then they've earned their wages and then some.

But such artistic robbery is by no means the be-all and end-all of the game's success. Let's face it, *Kick Off* (and even *Kick Off 2*) has plenty of faults, whereas *Rugby* has very few indeed. The *Kick Off* similarities will be debated everywhere, and at tedious length no doubt, but as far as I'm concerned (and I'm the one writing the review, after all), they stop right here – Domark's game is above all that. It's simply too good to be cheapened by comparisons with a three-year-old soccer game that passed it's sell-by date some time last year – and anyway, it provides a diffferent enough experience to more than stand on is own two feet. So let that be an end to such talk, eh?

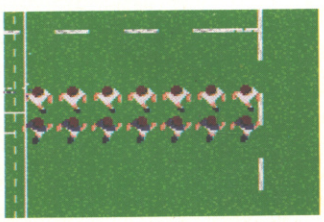
The most appealing aspect of *Rugby*'s gameplay is the way in which it has captured the spirit of the real game. This is no mean feat – in ten years of electronic experimentation, nobody else has ever come close. Alright, there've been a few management games, but these have been laughable or worse, while attempts at action games have been so universally dismal they've all plunged into obscurity almost the moment they were released.

On this occassion though, the result is a good deal more satisfying. Almost everything from real rugby is here – line-outs, scrums, rucks and conversions. The only omissions are penalties and foul-play, which would have been exciting – especially given the importance of these in the recent World Cup itself. Some might argue that their absence here was a wise choice because you really do play your team as a team, and not as fifteen individual players, but I reckon that if this spawns a sequel (and I hope it does), then yes – there'll be penalties all right.

SCRUM LIKE IT HOT

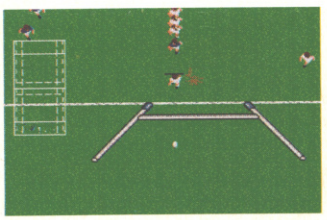
So how does the game actually work? Well, scrums and line-outs, the central conflict of the game, are won the hard way – by frantic joystick waggling.

If you're faster than your opponent you'll keep on coming out of scrums with the ball, and it follows that you'll probably

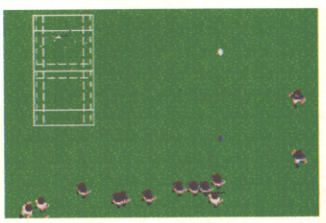


The line-out. Guess, if you can, what subtle tactical manouevre you have to employ to gain possession here. That's right, waggle that stick like crazy.

Clearly something's gone tragically wrong here, as England have won the scrum, but if that back doesn't get rid of the ball sharpish he'll be trampled into the dirt.



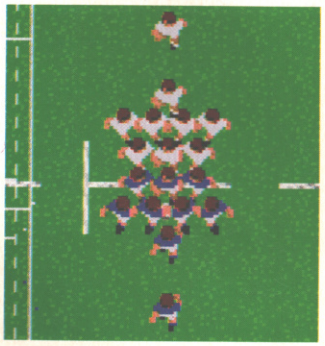
And it's over! Despite the attentions of the chasing English pack, Scott Hastings successfully punts one between the posts – three points to Scotland. Hurrah!



Usefully, you can alter the size of the on-screen radar display, or even dispense with it entirely if you want to see Scotland in all their uninterrupted glory.

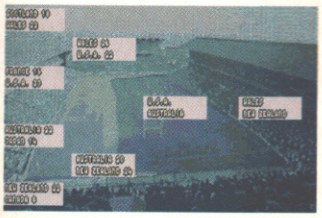
copyist it may be, Domark's *Rugby* will echo the impact of the World Cup itself.

Y THE D CUP



A scrum – you'll be seeing a lot of this particular screen, and your wrist will soon grow to hate the sight of it. Yep, it's time for another frantic burst of waggling!

This options screen lets you select how many players take part in the tournament. You can have human players for all 16 teams, or let the computer play the lot and win lots of dosh betting with your chums...



...and here's what happens if you do. Er... (Lovers of reality in their games will be comforted by the fact that the All Blacks did in fact manage to triumph in this clash of the, erm, 'titans'.)

win the game.

For some, of course, that'll immediately sound like a down point. Fast joystick waggling is hardly ever a favourite among modern games players because it doesn't favour skill and dexterity so much as technique and, ultimately, stamina. Seedy jokes aside, your wrist hurts like hell when it's been waggling almost non-stop for twenty minutes – you get hot and bothered and frustrated but, hey, one look at the state of the guy you're trying to beat makes you want to carry on. It's the fact that you do have to push yourself physically, at least in some limited way, that makes this so satisfying a sports sim.

It's by no means all brute physical strength though. Tactics play a major role, as do plain common sense and devilish timing. Tackling is a matter of simplicity. All you have to do is steer the nearest man toward the opposing player who's carrying the ball. Each man is underlined, but it's possible to move the computer designated bloke out of the way, in order that a more convenient player be selected. This may sound unnecessarily complicated, but in fact it's really quite simple.

Walking Circles have succeeded in making all parts of the game that should run automatically tick along without a hitch. For example, when you turn around to pass a ball backwards, there'll usually be someone with eager arms waiting to receive. This is always the case when coming out of a maul, although you'll find you only get about half a second from your scrum-back picking up the ball to releasing it. Half an eye on the scanner will reveal the lay-out of players, but you really have to be quick to succeed cleanly without bringing on any more messy rucking and mauling.

When one player has possession in space there are a number of options available. He can run for the line, pass backwards, or kick forwards. Whichever tactic you favour will determine the style of your team's game, and (probably) its success rate. This, of course, helps you draw pleasing parallels with the real World Cup, where some teams were most definitely running teams, while others relied very much on long kicks.

In fact, this isn't (unlike many tie-ins) subtitled 'The World Cup' for nothing. The Cup does, in fact, play a fairly heavy role in this game, which is all to the good. For a start, before the big event, there were plenty of us who thought rugger was a game for big blokes who were too thick and too slow to play beautiful, precious soccer. Afterwards, though, you can feel a new respect for the game everywhere, and *Rugby: The World Cup* helps ram the message home. The only reason there haven't been great rugby games before this is that programmers have almost criminally ignored the game's potential.

"Here is a game that is as exhilarating as it is knackering"

So, full marks to Domark then. They'll be happily cashing in on newly won converts to the glorious game, and they deserve it. If there's such a thing as justice, people will be playing their own little World Cup tournaments up and down the country this winter – while the game is fun and challenging in one-player mode (the computer opponents are no push-overs, even when they're USA!), it's at its best when you enter up to human competitors (up to 16!) into the proceedings, and play the tournament proper.

As I said, this is very much one of those games which you'll play on your own perhaps not so much for pure enjoyment as in order to become proficient for those times when you'll be squaring up against your mates – that being the case, my recommending it if you're unlikely to be playing anyone else has to be more reserved. If you *do* have got lots of similarly sports mad mates though, it's a must-buy. With other people it's heaps of fun, and no mistake – and that holds true even if you're the sort of person who normally hates rugby. Who knows, even if the sport itself – despite everything – hasn't managed to change your mind yet, this game just might.

● *COLIN CAMPBELL*

Don't believe everything you see on TV – it's clearly from an alternative universe. Here we see the true and proper result of that intense semi-final clash. (*Who wrote these captions anyway? - Ed*)

UPPERS Excellent and enduring fun as a two-player game, and not without its appeal in one-player mode. Sticks to the hard and fast rules of the real game well, while making it a fast, exciting play, and it gleams with technical brilliance too. It might be a *Kick Off* copyist, but to my mind it's in many ways an improved one.

DOWNERS It's a hard game on your wrists, and the lack of penalties is a bit of a disappointment. Not quite so hot in one player mode as with friends.

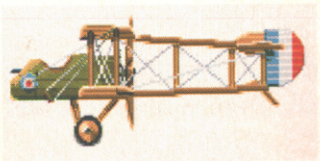
THE BOTTOM LINE

Sports fans should definitely be adding this to their shopping lists, while mainstream gamers might well be tempted too – they'll be missing out on something if they aren't.

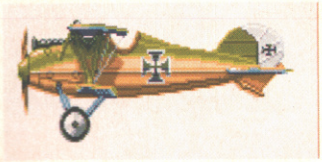
86 PERCENT

SKY DRIVING ON A WING AND PRAYER

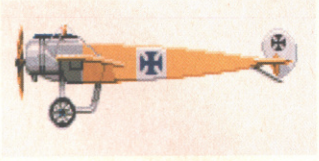
The *Knights Of The Sky* game focuses on the daring-do of WWI air conflicts, the only problem ebing that World War I fighter planes were completely crap. Some, however, were slightly (slightly) less crap then the rest. Here they are:



DE HAVILLAND DH 2
As grim as it looks. The DH 2 is a 'pusher' design, meaning that the propeller's at the back. This makes it look a bit like one of those weird swamp boat things on Gentle Ben, and about as fun to fly. Still, what can you expect for 1916?



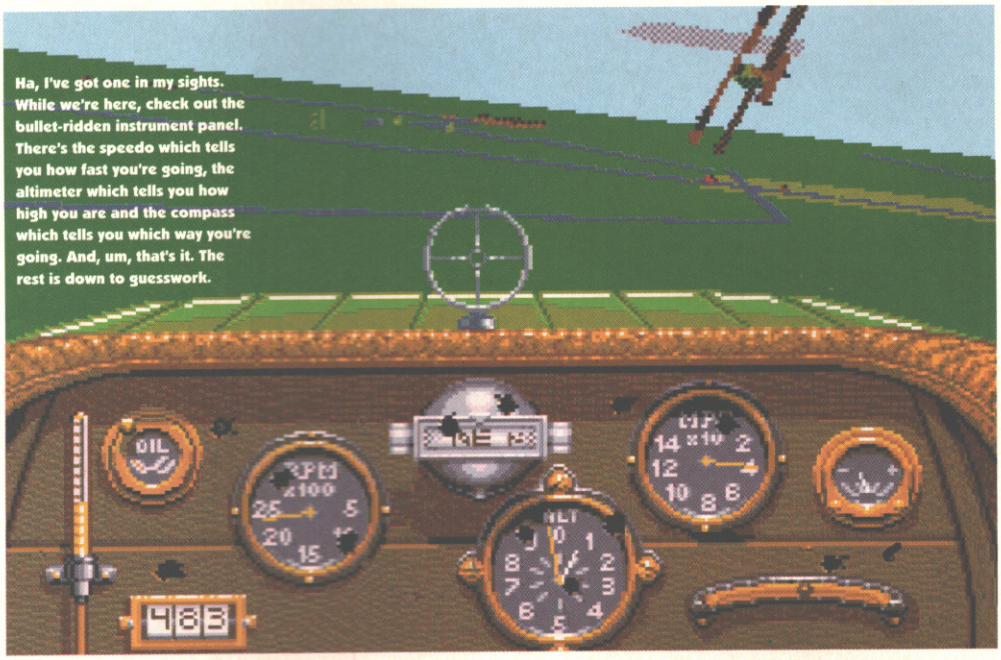
ALBATROS D5
There was a whole series of Albatroses, but this is about the best (believe it or not). It's quite nice and streamlined, thanks to its inline engine, but you still need nerves of steel to go up in one.



FOKKER E III EINDEKKER
Looks pretty cool from a distance, but isn't. 85 mph tops, and a slightly rude-sounding name to boot. The one consolation is that it has a gun that fires through the propeller(!) , making it a good deal easier to aim.

Games: Knights Of The Sky
Publisher: MicroProse
Price: £34.99
Authors: Kevin Buchner, Andrew Parton, Mark Langerak (code) and Steve Cain (graphics) at MicroProse.
Release: Out now

It seems like only pages ago that I was accusing the A-6 Intruder of being slow and unwieldy. But I take back everything I said, I really do. In fact, you hereby have my permission to cut out the relevant paragraph, roll it up tightly and shove it up my right nostril. Until you've tried clinging to the air in a bullet-ridden Sopwith Camel, struggling to top 50 mph, flogging it for all it's worth in order to make it those last couple of miles back to the safety of the British lines, you haven't even begun to experience 'slow and unwieldy'. Compared to the Sopwith Camel, the A-6 Intruder seems possessed of positively gazelle-like qualities. The Sopwith Camel is to air combat what the Raleigh Grifter is to international cycle racing.



Ha, I've got one in my sights. While we're here, check out the bullet-ridden instrument panel. There's the speedo which tells you how fast you're going, the altimeter which tells you how high you are and the compass which tells you which way you're going. And, um, that's it. The rest is down to guesswork.

THE MEN, MACHINES AND GRAVITY

Luckily, what the Sopwith Camel lacks in speed it makes up for in agility – you could quite literally turn it on a sixpence (as long as it was quite a big one). The same goes for the 19 other World War I planes *Knights Of The Sky* gives you the opportunity to fly, and that's essentially what makes it such a fab game. Flying a biplane is a completely different experience to flying a jet fighter, and *Knights* manages to capture its pitfalls with uncanny precision. You're basically fighting a constant battle to defy Newtonian physics. Your woefully underpowered airframe is just about capable of maintaining a steady 70 mph in level flight, so if you want to go any faster you'll have to sacrifice some height, and if you want to climb you'll have to content yourself with teetering on the brink of a stall at about 40 mph. It's all very touch and go, especially as your plane is hopelessly wobbly, and never quite seems to go in the direction you've got in mind. Remember, though, that your opponents (the 'Boche') are suffering from similar problems, so dogfights are resolved on not only who's the best tactician, but also who can stay in the air for longest.

As you might expect, before take-off you have to wade through screenfuls of

KNIGHTS OF THE SKY

Forget modern warfare. The latest release from simulation-meisters MicroProse forsakes high speed jets for tuc

SOPWITH CAMEL
The plane you've heard so much about. Must be pretty nifty, right? Wrong. Although it was the most successful Allied plane in terms of kills, the Sopwith Camel is actually just as useless as the rest of them. Edwardian engineering, eh?

NIEUPORT 17
French, and correspondingly weird. All the same, it shifts a bit (well, 110 mph) and is slightly less embarrassing to be seen in than the DH 2, which is perhaps why the aces of the time preferred it.

FOKKER DR 1
If you see one of these painted bright red, run for it – it's probably the Red Baron. The Fokker Triplane's three (or is it six?) wings gave it amazing agility and climbing skills. (Well, when I say *amazing*...)

"It's not just the feel of *Knights* that's right, the look is 'there' as well"

options. The first of these is the most important – it's where you decide whether to go for flight training, a straight dogfight against an ace of your choice, a fight against a chum playing on another computer or World War I proper. This last one is where things really start to happen. You start off as a new recruit at the beginning of the air war with no kills to your credit and have to work your way up the ranks by flying missions and downing Germans. (You can only play on the Allied side, although in the training options you can fly German planes if you want.) Your eventual aim is to become numero uno, the ace of aces, by downing lots of top German pilots like Ernst Udet and Manfred von Richthofen.

Every pioneer fighter pilot's nightmare, once they've got over the initial shock of finding themselves in a completely crap biplane, is running into the Red Baron. He shoots down Brits in his sleep, practically, and spends the rest of the time running Jagdeschwader 1, alias the Flying Circus.

It's not just the feel of *Knights* that's right, the look is 'there' as well. While MicroProse's *F-15 II* looked, I felt, a bit brown and bland, here we're talking green fields and trees, blue rivers and sea, white cliffs, blue barrage balloons (which explode with a wonderful noise when you shoot them), grey and brown trucks (depending on whose side they're on) and buildings in all shapes and colours. The brightly-coloured planes help a lot too. Views? There are plenty of those, including a much better 'chase plane' than usual and a really weird and completely useless 'radio control' view. The graphics aren't quite as smooth as the PC original's, particularly when there's lots on screen, but they never become intrusively jerky and you can always turn the detail level down a bit. (And we are talking 20 MHz 386 PC with Turbo accelerator card here, rather than a £300 Amiga.) Presentation throughout is absolutely top hole too, starting with a flickery black and white intro sequence, complete with period music, and continuing throughout the game with pictures of all the aircraft and aces you'll be up against, along with plenty of performance figures and kill ratios.

"It immediately becomes *the* World War I flight sim"

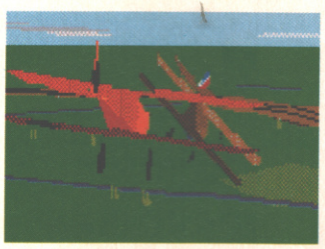
In fact, the only real problems are those which apply to any flight sim. Firstly there are the inevitable horrors of flying a plane with a digital joystick, which means sloppy handling and occasionally unpredictable behaviour. The only answer to this is mouse control or an analogue joystick, but *Knights* doesn't cater for either of these terribly well. This has to be seen as a major oversight really, as any flight sim should try to offer authentic joystick feel.

REAL SEAT-OF-YOUR-PANTS STUFF

Then there's the fact that to glance over your shoulder during a dogfight means fumbling around with the keyboard – it's usually easier just to try and guess where the enemy is. Combine the two problems and you get one big one, with baddies flashing across your view with gay abandon while you desperately wrestle with the controls to try and pursue them. Like I said, though, you get this with any flight sim. With only the likes of (the relatively poor and far slower) *Blue Max* competing with it, *Knights of the Sky* has no trouble at all in immediately becoming *the* World War I flight sim.

It's got the lot – great graphics, seat-of-your-pants flying, accessibility (you won't need to worry about radars or chaff dispensers), and tinkly piano music. Take it from me: hedge-clipping in a creaky biplane is considerably more fun than the detached business of flying a modern warplane, and a lot less expensive if you come a cropper.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*



A shiny red plane may seem a bit conspicuous, but its the bullets right up your tail which really grab your attention.

UPPERS Quite a different style of game to your usual jet fighter sim, and more enjoyable in most ways. Straightforward gameplay, great sound, graphics and so on. It doesn't really feel like a flight sim, and that's going to be a good thing for a lot of people.

DOWNERS Not for those who think of flying as a precise affair, or who thirst for speed and power. The level of graphic detail causes speed probs.

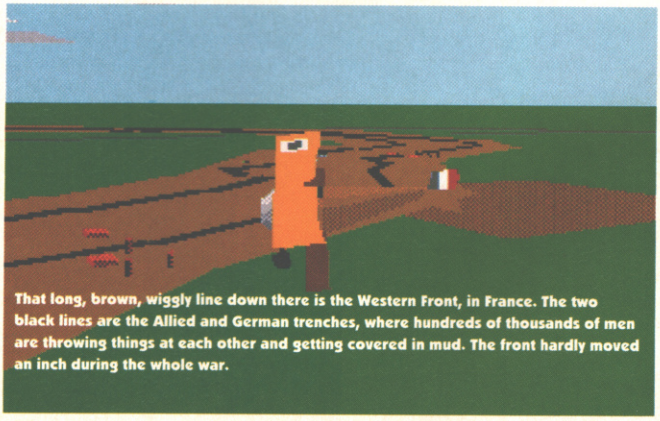
THE BOTTOM LINE

Immensely playable and atmospheric, making you wonder whether 90 years of progress have all been worthwhile.
You've really got to try it to see the attraction.

87 PERCENT

...much more 'basic' skills of those magnificent men and – yes! – their flying machines...

The main problem facing the aviator (apart from getting shot down in dogfights like this) is finding one's way around. There are no electronic navigation systems, radars or any of that sort of thing, so if you get lost you'll have to rely on your compass, your map and distinctive ground features. You could always shout down to passing motorists, of course.



That long, brown, wiggly line down there is the Western Front, in France. The two black lines are the Allied and German trenches, where hundreds of thousands of men are throwing things at each other and getting covered in mud. The front hardly moved an inch during the whole war.

Watch out for AMIGA FORMAT

SOUND&VISION

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

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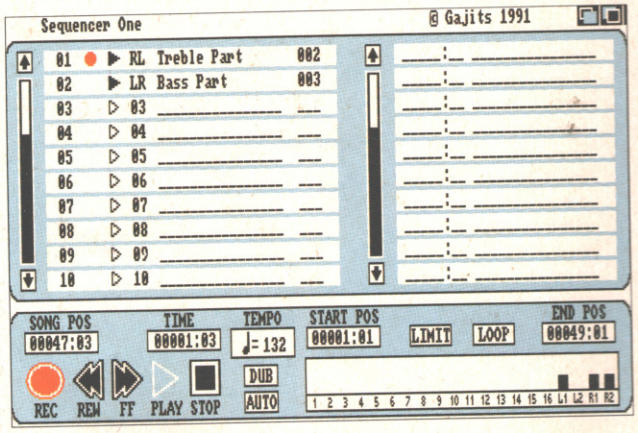
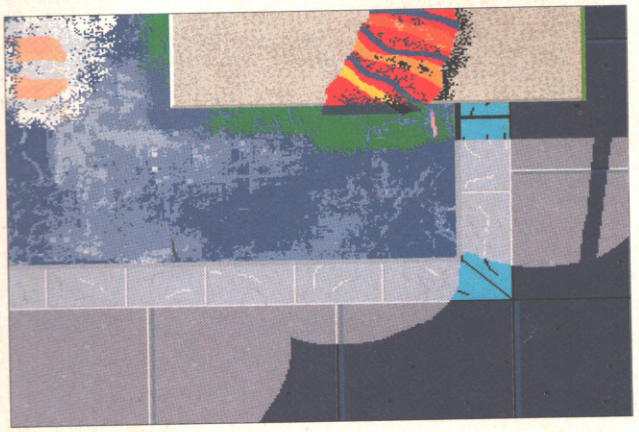
Music software worth £99



SOUND&VISION, part one: the complete Sequencer One from Gajits, worth £99, AF rated 80% in issue 24. It's the best beginners' music package there is, making it easy for you to create whole tunes on your Amiga. It can be used on its own or with MIDI musical instruments such as synthesisers. It also comes with a heap of sound samples and a demo tune for you to see how it's done. And there are complete instructions for it as well as a complete guide to the exciting world of computer music in your free 32-page Sound and Vision supplement.

Sounds good to me!

A graphics program worth £65



SOUND&VISION, part two: the whole Graphics Workshop from Holosoft Technologies, worth £65, AF rated 90% in issue 25. It's an excellent paint and animation program in the Deluxe Paint III mould, but with a couple of features that make it even more special. You can use its powerful features to make drawing easy, or you can create whole animations. It's fun and rewarding, and there's also complete instructions for its use as well as a special guide to the tricks and techniques of computer animation in your free 32-page Sound and Vision supplement.

Looks pretty amazing!

Three brand-new levels of Lemmings?

What a stunning game demo! The smash hit of the year is back with a whole new set of levels, and you can try some of them out only with Amiga Format. You don't even need a copy of Lemmings to try these new levels, so if you've never played Lemmings before find out what all the fuss is about!

That's going to be fun!

PLUS: Find out what we think are the best ten games of 1991: discover what 20 top programming teams think will be big in 1992: check out the contenders for Number One game this Christmas: and much, much more!

Amiga Format Issue 30, January 1992: The Christmas Special: two disks, two complete full-price programs worth over £160, free SOUND&VISION supplement, Lemmings Coverdisk demo, 300 page bumper issue, all for only £3.95! On sale December 12: don't miss it!

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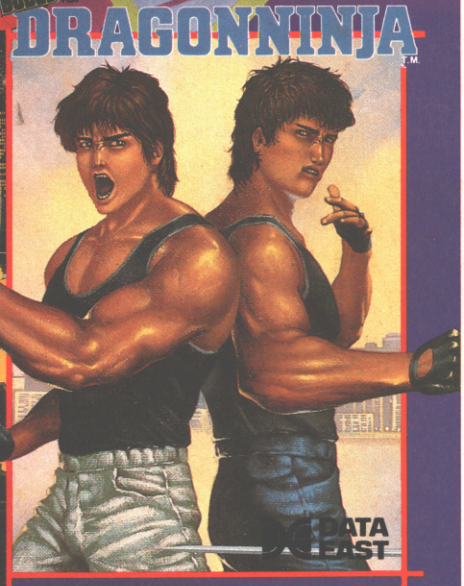

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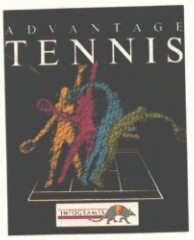
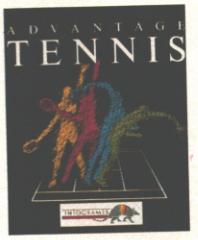


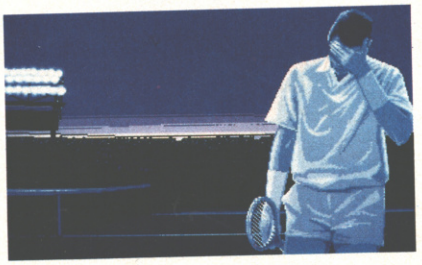
ADVANTAGE TENNIS



Monday, 3rd of November 1991 THE NEWSPAPER OF CHAMPION GAMES. ★ 1st year N# 000001

SIMPLY UNBEATABLE!

Another crushing victory for ADVANTAGE TENNIS over its rivals. Its indisputable technical superiority was proved last season on all surfaces. Like us, Tennis World is wondering if this year, there will be a player who is well trained enough to succeed in taking ADVANTAGE TENNIS' title and becoming Number 1.



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Fine! You have not given up. Your technical and mental qualities have made you Number 1 in the world ranking. Every winner deserves a medal. So if you're among the first 200 to send us a screen shot representing the first page of your press book proving that you have defeated ADVANTAGE TENNIS, you will get the badge ADVANTAGE TENNIS PLAYER NUMBER 1.

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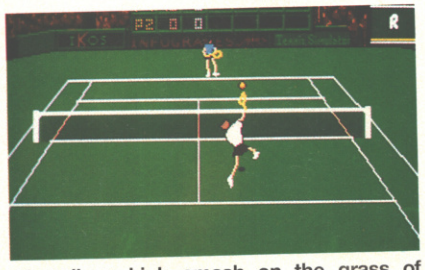
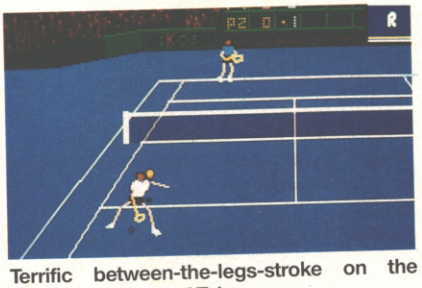
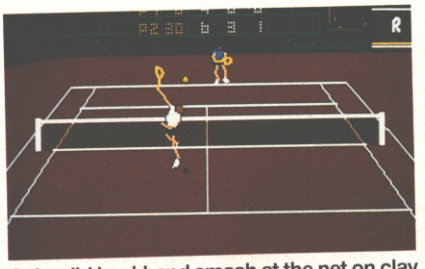


Marvellous high smash on the grass of Wimbledon.



Terrific between-the-legs-stroke on the synthetic surface of Tokyo.



Splendid backhand smash at the net on clay at Roland Garros.

HEAD
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F-29 RETALIATOR

(Ocean)

***F-29 Retaliator*: you'll find taking out this bridge much (much) easier if you decide to cheat...**

When asked to enter your name, type THE DIDY MEN, then click on the Colonel icon and press Return. Choose battle area as normal and select battle control. Accept a mission (without choosing one), then select a mission. Now start the game and play normally. When you come to land, simply press Enter (on the numerical keypad) and the plane will land all by itself.

To fly any mission with infinite weapons, enter your name as CIARAN and press Return, then load up the pilots log. Your name should now read OCEAN OK and you can carry on as normal.

SHADOW WARRIORS

(Ocean)

During the intro sequence hold down the following keys (you may need a few extra fingers):
CTRL, ESC, '5', F2, right ALT, '(', 'V', ENTER and HELP (the bracket and Enter refer to the keypad keys).
Now during the game pressing HELP advances you a level and 'Q' makes you invincible. (It says here).

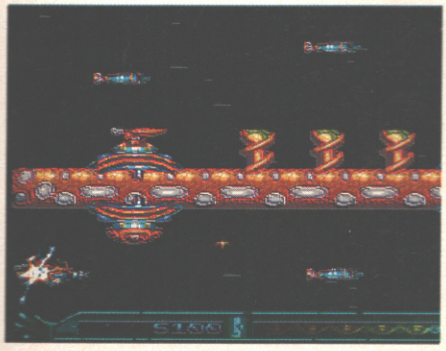
HELP (I NEED SOMEBODY)

Answering Mark Dunkley's pleas on *Shadow Of The Beast II* from last month is our old chum Adrian Scotland of Norborough. Take it away, Adrian.

There is no one password for the problem section. To find out which one is being used, you must use the crane to pick up the large boulder and drop it onto the spike, then push the small rock onto the seesaw. Climb up the rope and drop onto the opposite end of the seesaw, run to the lift which should take you up to a hill, fight the thingy and rescue the sack – he will then tell you the correct password.

ARMALYTE

(Thalamus)



When you start the game, press 'P' to pause and type in 'Delta 3' (with space). This should give you infinite lives.

Pretty graphics, but also pretty tough – that's *Armalyte*

COMPLETE control

Welcome to Complete Control, AMIGA POWER's as yet unbeaten tips section. This month, it's Gary Penn who takes, well, complete control, with tips and playing guides to *Lotus Turbo Challenge II, Utopia, MiG-29 Super Fulcrum*, and loads more. If you were struggling with any of these then struggle no longer – they're straight from the programmer's mouths...

EVEN MORE TOP-QUALITY ACTION REPLAY POKES

Remember kids, to use these pokes you must have an Action Replay cartridge. Just press the red button, type in 'M' followed by the address given (ie for *Bubble Bobble* type 'M91FE'), and a row of numbers will come up. Change the first – and ONLY the first – one to alter the number of lives, credits or whatever (experimentation should yield dividends), and away you go.

Hawkeye	EC9B	lives
Bubble Bobble	91FE	lives
Xenon	12530	lives
Bionic Commando	C15682	lives
Arkanoid II – Rev. Of Doh	D61E39	lives
CJ's Elephant Antics	1EC71	lives
The Killing Game Show	2255	lives
Last Ninja II	6CAE9	lives
Last Ninja III	2B77F	lives
Fantasy World Dizzy	1422C	lives
Lupo Alberto	22ABA	Lupo lives
	22ABB	Marta lives
	2367F	Lupo's helmet
Switchblade	5746C	lives
Car-Vup	1706B	lives
Flimbo's Quest	EC4	lives
Rodland	20C6D	lives
Venom Wing	1F261	lives
R-Type II	1497F	lives

(Thanks this month to Gary Cole, Colin, Peter, David, Julio and Graham).

SWITCHBLADE II

(Gremlin)

It's a little known porky that the 'II' in *Switchblade II* actually represents the two (count 'em) different types of 'cheat mode' available. Activating them couldn't be easier... (Honestly).

Fig 1: wait for the *Switchblade II* title screen to form before attempting to activate any cheats

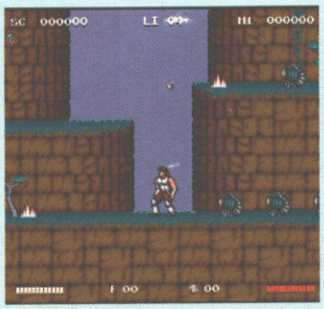


Fig 2: climb every mountain and avoid every Bad Creature on Level Two

Fig 3: beware of big robots on Level Three

PLAY ANY LEVEL

The first 'cheat' is a 'real' one which allows any level to be played.

Load *Switchblade II* as usual but don't press any firebuttons or keys just yet. Wait for the title screen (Fig 1) to assemble. Now type 'L', 'E', 'V', 'E', 'L' and press a number key from '2' to '6' corresponding to the desired level number (Fig 2, Fig 3, Fig 4, Fig 5, Fig 6). For example, type 'LEVEL4' if you want to play Level Four. Note there will be no immediate visible effect. Press the firebutton to begin play from the chosen level.

A COMPLETE 'HIDDEN' 'SECRET' GAME!

The second *Switchblade II* 'cheat' is for accessing a 'secret' 'hidden' complete game.

Load *Switchblade II* as usual but don't press an firebuttons or keys. Wait for the title screen (Fig 1) to assemble. Now type 'C', 'H', 'R', 'O', 'M', 'E'. The screen will turn black for approximately 15 seconds, the disk will be accessed and the title screen for the 'hidden' complete 'secret' game called 'CHROME' will appear (Fig 7). The program will cycle through a short sequence comprising brief 'instructions' (Fig 8) and the high-score table before returning to the title screen. Fig 8: a summary of special blocks to watch out for in *Chrome*.

INSTRUCTIONS (FOR CHROME)

Chrome is the precursor to *Venus: The Flytrap*. (Budding game designers and programmers should note that *Chrome* earned *Switchblade II* and *Venus: The Flytrap* author George Allan a job at Gremlin).

SO WHAT EXACTLY IS CHROME?

Chrome is a simple 20-level blend of shoot-'em-up and platform action in which the player controls a jumpin'-'n'-a-shootin' ball (Fig 9). From the title screen (Fig 7), three options are available: enter a level codeword, begin play from the level determined by the codeword currently in use, and determine whether one or two players enjoy the fun (each player takes a turn when the other loses a life).

To enter a level codeword, press the relevant key: 'F1' for Player One, 'F2' for Player Two (yes, the second player can begin from a different level), and 'F3' for both players. Now simply type the letters to spell out the five-letter code corresponding to the desired level then press the 'RETURN' key or the firebutton.

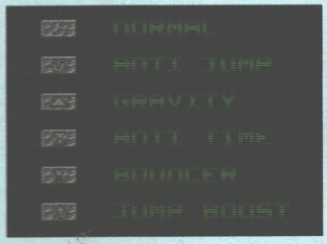


Fig 7: the *Chrome* title screen

Ensure that a joystick in plugged into the port marked '2 JOYSTICK'. Press the joystick firebutton to be shown the Player and Level number. Press the firebutton a second time to begin play for real.

The world of *Chrome* is filled with platforms (Fig 9), special blocks (Fig 8, Fig 9), Bad Creatures (Fig 9, Fig 10) and Magic Yellow Stars (Fig 9). The rules are simple: jump on the platforms, watch out for the Special Blocks and Magic Yellow Stars (not all of them are useful), and don't touch anything animate.

THE BAD CREATURES

Anything which destroys the player's craft outright is a Bad Creature, so shoot them before they hit it.

Not all Bad Creatures can be killed. When an indestructible Bad Creature is shot it makes a different sound.

TIME IS SHORT

The Time Limit bar decays naturally at a slow rate, depleting faster when the craft touches an Anti-Time block.

SHOTS ARE LIMITED

The craft begins with a supply of 20 shots – extra shots are gained by collecting the appropriate Magic Yellow Stars.
Note that up to three shots can be in action at once.

DEATH AND DERISION

The craft is destroyed when it hits a Bad Creature or the Time Limit bar runs out. Two spare craft are provided.

Fig 4: Level Four has this really (really) large waterfall to negotiate

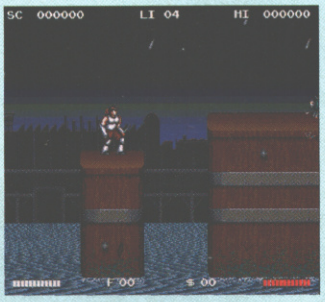


Fig 5: there's a right old mean-lookin' storm a-brewin' on Level Five

Fig 6: firey pits, tiny volcanoes and yellow wiggly things abound on Level Six

THE LEVEL END

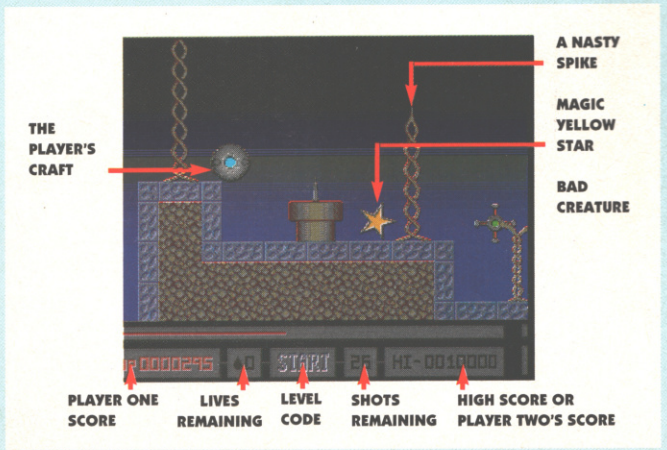
Basically, keep going until the craft can go on no more. Then the level will end. A bonus is awarded based on the time remaining, so don't be slow if you want the points. Press the joystick firebutton to skip the bonus countdown.

GAME OVER

When all of the craft have been used up, the game is over. If you managed to get a score better than those in high-score table, you can enter your initials in the top five officials. There are three character spaces to fill with letters, full stops or spaces (Fig 11). Move the highlight left or right over the letters by means of the respective joystick shaft movements. Move the shaft up or down to select the character of your choice, and press the joystick firebutton to register the three characters shown.

MAGIC YELLOW STAR

The properties of a Magic Yellow Star are not revealed until it's collected. It could provides 20 extra shots, or could even reverse the joystick control for approximately 10 seconds.



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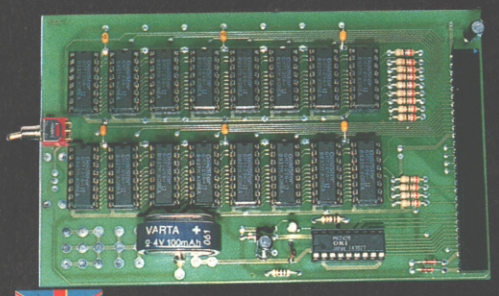

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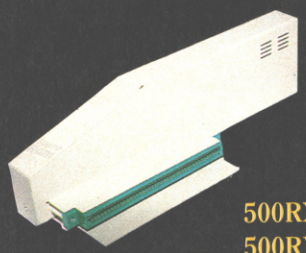

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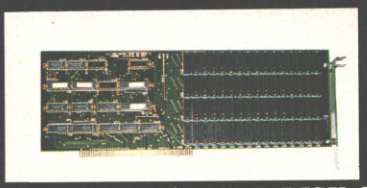

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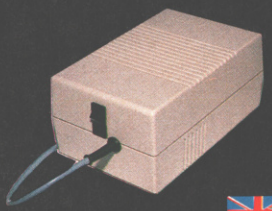

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MiG-29 SUPERFULCRUM

(Domark)

It's jovial John Kavanagh again, only now he's left The Kremlin to pursue an alternative career at Domark...

The helicopters are slow, so don't waste missiles on them – use your cannons.

Don't unleash missiles from too great a distance from the target – the enemy fighters release flares, and the missiles will simply miss.

When it comes to dogfighting, turn off the cockpit display and use the Head Up Display (fig1). It's a more realistic view, but more importantly it allows you to see more of the sky. Remember, in this mode you fire where you look. Your best bet is to move in real close to an enemy fighter before launching a missile – even it doesn't score a direct hit, the explosion will cause considerable damage to the enemy fighter. 'Missile Fuzing' is the term for this technique, apparently.

When refueling, make use of the autostabiliser.

Save your position often and advance gradually as opposed to not at all.

For small horizontal adjustments when lining up on a target, don't bank – always use the rudder. The MiG will slide through the air a little – "a bit like a tank," says John, helpfully.

As is the case with MiG, when you destroy a bases (a flag appears to show that it's taken), remember to take out any access routes – such as bridges – otherwise the tanks will come and take the base again.

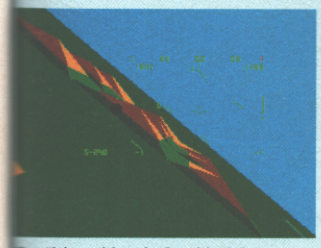

Fig1 Flying with only the aid of the Head Up Display gives much improved visibility.

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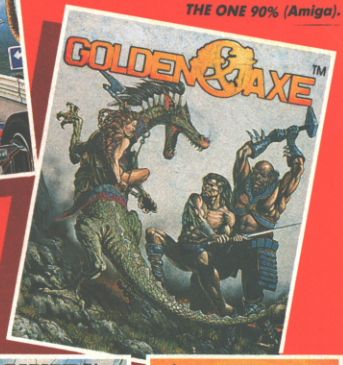

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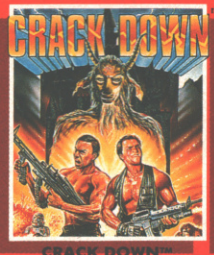

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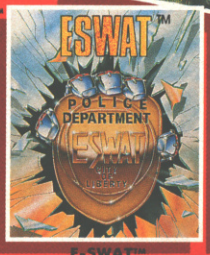

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LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE II

(Gremlin)

"But it's hardly much of an improvement over the original," some say. "Rot," that's what I say. Have they played the original lately? Well, I have and it's not so hot. Meanwhile, back with the sequel...

Driving duffers despair no longer, for here is Magnetic Fields' very own boisterous racer, Shaun Southern, with some advice that's nice.

AUTOMATIC OR MANUAL GEARS?

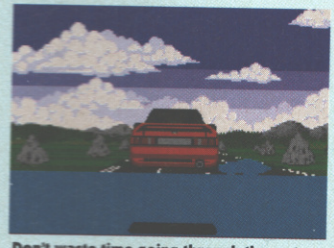
While the Automatic Gear option is useful for beginners, faster acceleration is best achieved by correct use of Manual Gears.

OVERTAKING

Uunderstandably, overtaking is much easier on straight sections of road

When overtaking, anticipate where the other car will be when you actually pass it as the opposition tends to veer from side to side.

FOREST LEVEL



Don't waste time going through the water – use a log to leap over it

Use the logs to jump over rivers

NIGHT LEVEL

One of the least spectacular levels is the night time driving – it's still fast though!

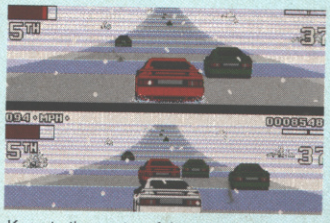
Visibility is very poor here, so try to keep to the centre of the road and be ready to turn quickly.

FOG LEVEL

The visibility's very poor here, too. Other cars tend to be more visible than the road, so follow them. Watch out for sudden bends and oil on the road.

Fig 3: beware of oil on the road when driving in the fog (amongst other things)

SNOW LEVEL

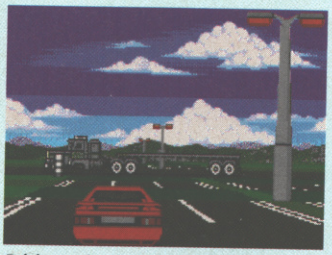


Keep to the centre of the road to avoid hitting drifts of snow.

DESERT LEVEL

Don't do a Mark Thatcher! Stay in the centre of the road to avoid getting stuck in the dunes.

CITY LEVEL



Driving under the trucks is a hazardous affair, but it does earn bonus points

Only cross into the oncoming traffic as a last resort. Steer under the trucks for bonus points.

MARSH LEVEL

The Marsh level: avoid the blue bits (they're the wet ones!)

Watch out for the water! Beware of hitting logs near bends as they will bounce the car off the road. Remember: the car sinks in the swamp. And don't forget to collect the Extra Time Bonuses.

STORM LEVEL

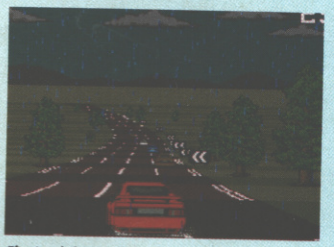
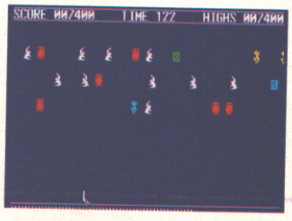


Fig 6: pick up these Turbo Bonuses and put the hammer down

Collect the Turbo Bonuses for extra speed (Fig 6). Watch out for rocks on the road!

HIDDEN DUCK

Hidden away in *Lotus Turbo Challenge II* is a dinky little copy of the ancient arcade duck-blasting classic Carnival. Simply enter 'DUX' as your level password, then, er, get blasting those ducks.



Shoot the ducks, and the rabbits, and the owls, and the...

UTOPIA

(Gremlin)

Utopia is one of those gigantic _Sim City_ crossed with _Populous_ sort of things. In other words, a god sim. As such it takes a bit of working out, which is where this comes in...

Fig 1: a simple trick helps keep disk swapping to a minimum

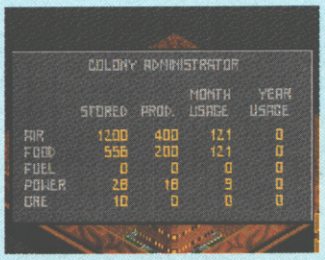


Fig 2: the Administrator's report is best checked regularly

Fig 3: these Markers were placed quickly

Graham Ing is the author of *Utopia*, and he's here to help with his degree in cleverness in his pocket...

MINIMISING DISK SWAPPING
Owners of single drive systems who wish to avoid a lot of disk swapping during play should load the Map Screen from the Game Disk then replace it with the Scenario Disk in the drive and keep it there (Fig 1). Now the Map Screen can be accessed immediately, and the disks do not have to swapped when a Spy report has to be read (it's loaded from the Scenario Disk). Access the Advisers via the function keys, 'F1' to 'F6'.

DON'T FORGET THE ADVISERS
Some of the information available on the Adviser Information Panels is not updated until the beginning of a new month. Get into the habit of looking at one or more of the Advisers on the list on the 2nd of each month. It's particularly useful to view the Psychiatrist ('F1') and Administrator ('F2' - Fig 2) reports to determine priorities for the coming month.

USE THE KEYS FOR PLACING MARKERS
Pressing keys '1' to '8' is the fastest method of placing Markers (Fig 3), as described on page 20 of the manual.

FLUX POD POSITIONING
Ensure there's a good spread of Flux Pods throughout the colony. You can then build freely without being told that you are building too far from a Flux Pod. In particular, build Flux Pods around the edge of a colony to allow fast outward expansion (Fig 4).

BACKUP YOUR COMMAND CENTRES
Progress is severely hampered by the destruction of the Command Centre (see page 13 of the manual). When at war with the enemy, build one or more backup Command Centres (Fig 5).

BUILD MORE HOSPITALS
With a high population, the more hospitals (Fig 6), the greater the effect on the Quality Of life.

Invest in scientific research early (by building Laboratories and recruiting Scientists, Fig 7). Ensure adequate research grants are maintained. Obtaining inventions takes time, so don't waste it.

GRANT EQUAL GRANTS
When putting money into Research Grants on the Finance Screen, increase Military and Civilian Grants by equal amounts.

INTELLIGENCE AND SPYING
Regularly check on the Intelligence Grant by assessing the Spy Report Screens every few months (Fig 7) even if no spy reports have been received. Keep the level of spying to at least 'NORMAL'.

UNDER ATTACK AND WITH A POWER SHORTAGE?
Then why not build energy-conserving Missile Launchers (Fig 9) instead of those power-hungry Laser Turrets?

STAKING OUT THE LOCATION OF AN ORE DEPOSIT
Simply enter the Map Screen and position one or more Markers over a patch of Ore (see page 20 of the manual). Now 'EXIT' to the main playfield and build a mine over the visible markers (Fig 9). The same process works for Fuel Deposits too.

AVOID BUILDING POWER STATIONS
Power Stations severely affect the Quality Of Life by producing hazardous waste products. Instead, conserve the environment by building plenty of Solar Panels (and plenty of Flux Pods too, to store the power during Solar Eclipses). The other advantage to this is that when a Solar Panel is destroyed by the enemy, only 2MW of power generation is lost instead of a Power Station's 50MW.

BUILD TANK CONSTRUCTION YARDS
Yes, build them around the perimeter of the colony. Now the tanks are ready to engage the enemy from any direction.

KEEP THE TANK YARDS CLEAR
When the space around the Tank Yard is full with tanks, move some of the tanks to unprotected areas of the colony to act as sentries. Ideally, small battalions of tanks should be posted in as many areas as possible so there is no weak point for the enemy to exploit.

SHORT OF CASH?
Then why not build more Workshops and Stores and regularly sell the Tech Goods produced? Alternatively (or additionally even), Chemical Plants and Fuel Tanks can be used.

IMMEDIATELY INCREASE INCOME TAX
As soon as play begins, increase the Income Tax to 20 per cent, lowering it by a small percentage as money is built up. When you hit the big time and have more cash than you can handle, reduce the Income Tax to zero per cent to keep the people really happy.

NOW BUILD A HOSPITAL
And increase the Birth Rate to 'HIGH' for a rapidly increasing population. As a result, more colonists will be available for construction and to work in industry. When the population size is at an acceptable level, reduce the Birth Rate to 'MEDIUM' to avoid building vast quantities of new Living Quarters and Hydroponics.

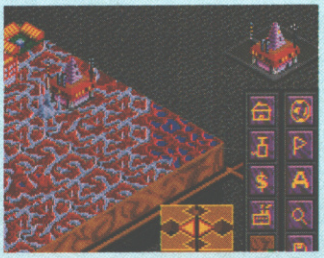


Fig 4: building Flux Pods around the edge of a colony creates fast expansion

Fig 5: it pays to keep a Command Centre or two spare, especially in times of war

Fig 6: one thing a high population needs is plenty of hospitals

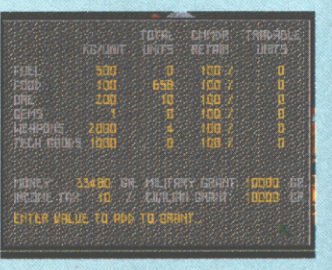


Fig 7: maintain scientific research by building Labs and recruiting scientists

Fig 18: amass your forces at the edge of the map before sending them into action

Fig 17: when an obstacle blocks your tanks, divert them

Fig 16: build hospitals, and set the little blighters (ah...) to it, as it were

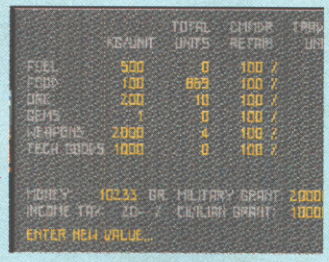


Fig 15: immediately collect cash by increasing the Income Tax to 20 per cent from the outset

OBSTACLES OBSTRUCTING TANKS?
So you want to move those tanks to a Marker but an obstacle is obstructing them? Position a new marker well clear of the obstruction but in another direction and send the tanks there first. Now send the tanks to the original marker.

ATTACK FROM THE EDGE OF THE MAP
When sending tanks and spaceships to attack the enemy city, remember that larger units have a greater effect than sending one or two tanks at a time. Ideally, amass tanks and spaceships at the edge of the map before sending them all off together. It's also worth building one or more Tank Yards near the edge of the map so the tanks can be sent immediately to the enemy city.

WIDE ROADS AID TANKS
Maintain 'roads' of at least two spaces wide throughout the colony so tanks can move without restriction.

LAND MINES
When the Land Mine Invention is available, drop Land Mines right in front of the enemy vehicles as they approach the colony.

FOR AN EXTREMELY LARGE RADAR COVERAGE...
Construct Flux Pods in all directions, building each Pod about 10 spaces out from the last to create a grid of Flux Pods 10 spaces apart. Now build a radar by every Flux Pod for radar coverage across almost the entire map.

LEARN FROM ENEMY ATTACKS
Learn the directions of enemy attacks and place extra defences in those areas. Where the terrain permits, seal off 'valleys' with a row of Laser Turrets or Land Mines and prevent enemy land vehicles from passing through.

Fig 20: Laser Turrets provide the ideal seal for 'valleys'

Fig 19: Keep the roads wide and allow the tanks to manoeuvre

Fig 14: build plenty of Workshops and Stores to make profitable Tech Goods

Fig 13: Spare Tanks make great sentries

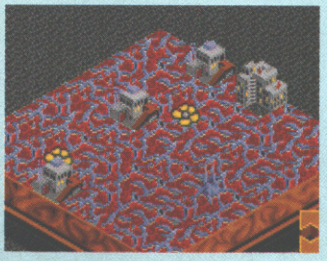


Fig 12: provide the best possible defence by building Tank Construction Yards around the colony perimeter

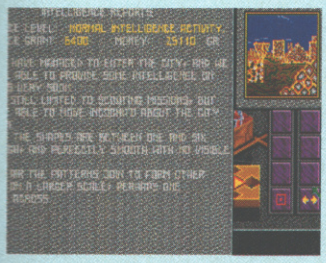


Fig 8: the Spy Reports are used to check on the Intelligence Grant

Fig 9: Missile Launchers aren't as power-hungry as Laser Turrets

Fig 10: mining Ore after discovering the location of an Ore Deposit

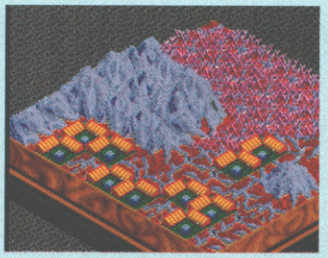
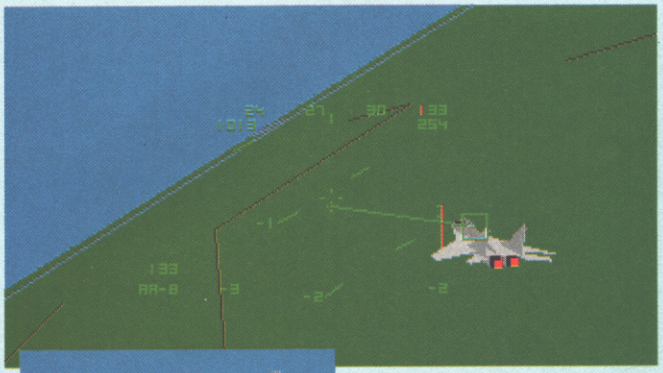


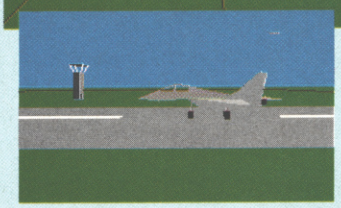
Fig 11: Solar Panels are the sensible alternative to Power Stations

MiG-29 FULCRUM

(Domark)

John Kavanagh out of The Kremlin knows more about this simulation and its 'sequel' than most. So who better to provide some advice for budding (and blooming for that matter) pilots..?





How to reach that final mission, use enemy targets for refueling, gain air superiority in dogfights, and use stalling techniques – it's all explained below.

● To qualify for the final mission, complete the first mission five times.

● In the final mission, try blowing up the reactor – it's an enormous target, so you can't miss it. Ho ho...

● Destroy an airfield then land on it for automatic refueling and rearmament. Note that you should remove any defences first, such as the towers and hangars, before taking out any enemy fighters – that way you won't have too many fighters to contend with.

● Anyone who thinks themselves hard enough should try playing without using any missiles. Strafing runs are not easy, so in the night mission, try taking out the train – but only with your cannons.

● In the first mission there's a second Harrier base that's not documented. If you can find it, destroy it for a laugh.

● Enemy fighters tend to come at you head on then try to get behind you. But why should you let them? Try 'Turning Early', ie, when a fighter's coming at you, turn to avoid it just before it's 'parallel' with you, so when it turns you will be on its tail.

● Better still, make use of stalling to help you get on the enemy fighter's tail. When a fighter turns, it naturally loses altitude, so the enemy's below, turn and let your nose fall to drop out of the sky directly onto the enemy fighter's tail.

POWERMONGER

(Electronic Arts)

***Powermonger* has many hidden features to discover, not all of which are revealed in the player's guide now available. Here's Peter Molyneux of Bullfrog with some advice and challenges...**

FUN WITH SHEEP: PART ONE

● Don't kill all the sheep. If you do, something very strange happens. On second thoughts, give it a go...

● Enlist a shepherd with sheep into your army. This way you have a portable food source. There's also a silly side-effect to be had. Set the shepherd afloat in a boat and his sheep will swim behind him. If the shepherd is killed, the sheep wibble on the water and look very stupid indeed.

● In the Winter, take a lone Captain to the North of the map. Leave him be, but keep 'em peeled... He should start 'shearing' a sheep, complete with appropriate sound effects. It doesn't last long though, as he has a tendency to kill his fleecy friend and eat it (Bullfrog insists they didn't implement this bit, and it is in fact a 'natural' side effect).

IN GENERAL...

● Don't starve your people during the Winter period otherwise they will revolt.

● Inventing cannons and catapults is easier than you might think. Simply make a Captain aggressive before clicking on the desired town and then on the invent icon. After 10 seconds or so click on the invent icon again and then on the town in question. This should speed up the process quite considerably.

● For a near invincible army which can take on all-comers and win with ease, collect together 10 people with boats and bows and arrows. Now you can attack any size of enemy force from the water.

AND FINALLY: SOME CHALLENGES FROM BULLFROG...

● Shoot down the child-bearing stork as soon as it appears (it always comes in from the top left-hand corner of the playfield). If you are successful, every pigeon will leave its tree home and carry a child in tow.

● Try chopping down all the trees in the world for a strange consequence. Hint: attack them.

● Try creating a city with all workshops in it so it produces lots of stuff.

● Try winning the last world on the top row of the map by inventing no extra weapons and staying in the water all the time. Hint: get yourself some boats together real quick!

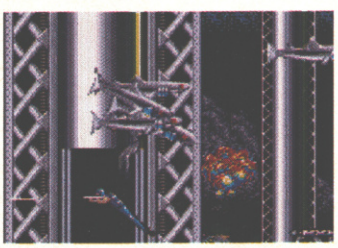
QUE?

Apparently there are some special names which can be entered for some bizarre effects ranging from more food to six Captains immediately and being able to select any world from the large map. What are they? Only time (well, Bullfrog) will tell...

THUNDERJAWS

(Domark)

It's more like *Blunderjaws* – or *Thunderbores* (or *Chunderjaws* even). (And come to think of it, doesn't the girlie on the panel at the bottom of the screen have a sad-looking face?) But that's beside the point...



Activating the cheat mode during play is the most helpful hint available for *Thunderjaws*

To activate the cheat mode, simply ensure that the mouse is plugged into its usual hole – ie, the port marked '1 JOYSTICK' – during play. Press and hold down the left-hand mouse button then press the 'S' key. Now pressing the right-hand mouse button will skip the level in play. Corks! Players with sensitive parents should note that the ending's a bit saucy (well, ish)...

If you really really really really really (etc) need any further help, you'd best write in with your request...

BATTLE CHESS II

(Electronic Arts)

When playing against a human player, try playing to lose for a change. The first person to lose is the winner. Daft? Yes. Easy? No, not really...

Every loser wins in *Battle Chess II*

Knightmare

"You are setting forth into another place, another time, another world," said Treguard, The Dungeon Master. "And what makes you think that you four mere mortals will succeed in the Quest, when so many others have failed?"

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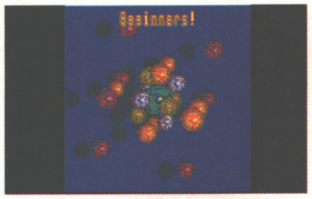
SPINDIZZY WORLDS

(Activision)



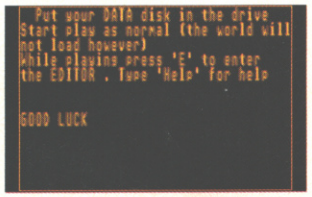
A Spindizzy Worlds cluster screen from where the 'cheat' is activated

With the editor 'active' during play, there's no scenery to negotiate

So here it is: how to access the hidden level designer. Load *Spindizzy Worlds* as usual and select a cluster of planets to view it in close-up .

Brief terms and conditions for using the *Spindizzy Worlds* editor

Don't press the firebutton to begin play. Instead, hold down a 'SHIFT' key and press the 'E' key. Release the 'SHIFT' key and type 'DIT' (that's 'EDIT' with a capital 'E', you see). A disclaimer screen should appear.



The 'instructions' presented once the player agrees to the 'conditions' of use

If you agree to the 'conditions', press the 'Y' to accept them. You will now be presented with some brief 'instructions'.

Press the joystick firebutton to return to the planet cluster, then press the joystick firebutton again to begin play. You will notice there is no scenery – this is your chance to create your own.

A summary of keys to please is

presented by pressing the 'HELP' key during 'play'

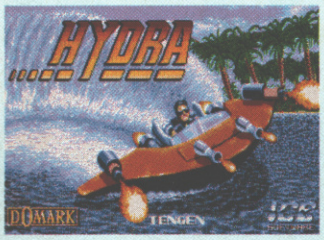
Unfortunately, there are no real instructions for the level designer as it was originally intended for the sole use of author Paul Shirley – the means of accessing the editor was added as an afterthought. There are some keys to please though, with the 'HELP' reminder presented here as a form of 'reference card'.

Due to the complexity of this editor, there's precious little in the way of further advice we can offer other than experiment without your *Spindizzy Worlds* disk in the drive. Look out for a forthcoming feature on designing your own *Spindizzy Worlds*...

Actually, anyone who can suss out how it all works and provide us with a detailed construction guide will be amply rewarded with software – well, if it's easy to understand and print here.

HYDRA

(Domark)



Type a simple statement during play to activate Hydra's cheat mode

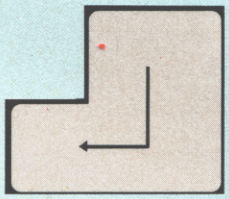
The bad news is that the team behind this conversion, Ice, haven't any advice for anyone keen to improve their water-based driving skills (perhaps some skillful soul could come to their aid...). The good news is that Ice were actually kind enough to furnish us with a cheat mode which will make life a lot easier (and more tedious with it, it must be said).

During play type 'KILLKILLKILL'. Nothing happens to indicate that the cheat mode is active, but it's easy enough to find out whether it is or not by pressing any of the following keys (if nothing happens, type 'KILLKILLKILL' again)...

Pressing almost any of the other letter keys or any numeric key or any function key will transport the Hydra craft to a new location (or 'level').

Toggles Technical Mumbo Jumbo

Fuel To The Max!



'RETURN' (Or 'ENTER') Cycle Through Weapons

RBI 2 BASEBALL

(Domark)

By 'eck, it's that John Kavanagh out of Domark again, only this time he's wearing a cap...

BATTING

● Stand in the top left-hand corner to hit the ball – you should then always get a home run.

● Stealing bases isn't easy but it's worth it. The manual explains how to force players to edge of the bases, so take advantage of this.

● Ensure that the fourth hitter is a hard hitter. The chances are he will hit a home run, allowing the potentially loaded bases to be cleared as everyone runs in. Hoorah!

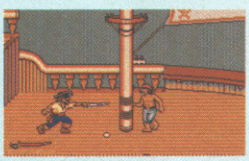
FIELDING

● Always attempt to put out the player nearest to home base, eg if there's a player on first and a player on third, throw the ball to the home base instead of first or second. Even if the player on third doesn't run, at least you didn't give him the chance to make a break for home base.

Pay attention to the statistics – they do work! – and move the team around accordingly.

SKULL & CROSSBONES

(Domark)



The lunge is one of the most effective moves available in *Skull & Crossbones*

There's no cheat mode, and there's little in the way of helpful hints. The following three 'morsels' of advice are all that Walking Circles, the team behind the conversion, have to offer...

1) Keep your sword power high by picking up the small coins.
2) Don't, whatever you do, look at Medusa.
3) The lunges and the back slash are the most effective moves available, so use them.

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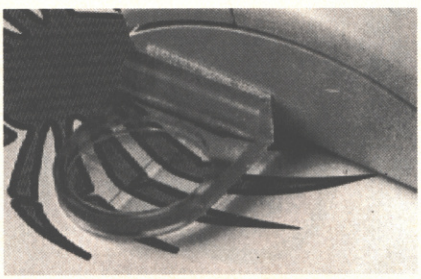

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POPULOUS
(Electronic Arts)

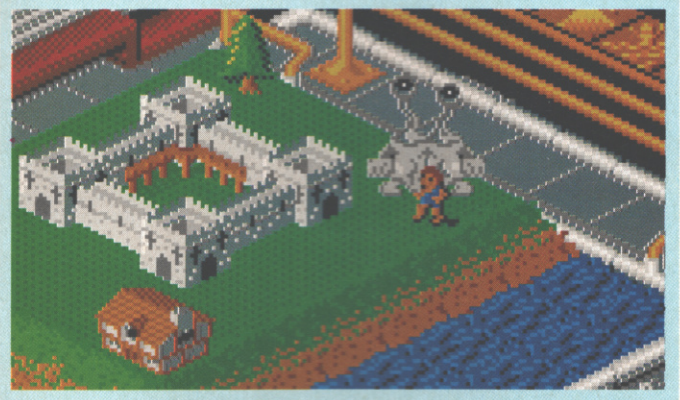

Fig 1: the Rock Monster appears on Rock World

Seeing as how *Populous* has been re-released on budget, here's a little something which has never been revealed before...

There are in fact three rather distasteful monsters (Fig 1, Fig 2, Fig 3) which simply roam across the landscape and eat people. To force the creatures to appear, simply fill the landscape with the maximum of 200 people. Et voila!

A CHEAT MODE!
There is in fact a cheat mode for *Populous* which Bullfrog are still refusing to reveal. "I kept it in, just in case I ever got challenged," explains Peter Molyneux. "And I was, in fact, in Japan, on the FM Towns version. Because the cheat's buried deep in the code it was converted, so it would have worked. The only problem was, every time you use the cheat it says 'CHEAT', and I had this dirty great television camera poking over my shoulder, so I couldn't use it..."

So here's a challenge: the first person to send us a working cheat mode for *Populous* can have a copy of *Populous II* once it's released.

The only clues available are that the cheat can only be activated in two-player mode and it involves a few mouse clicks.

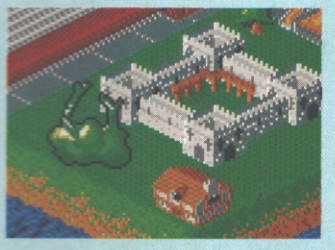

Fig 2: Ice World is where this unsavoury monster is found

Fig 3: a giant-sized Flying Wizard causes mucho havoc on Desert World

HAYULP!

So you can't get past a particular level of *Lemmings*? Or maybe you need help negotiating a tricky bit of *Rick Dangerous 2*? Or whatever. Perhaps you have a more general query about entertainment software in general? Fear not, for we can help with pretty much everything and anything software related. Please note that we will *not* give advice over the telephone. Queries will only be answered through the mag, so send them to HAYULP!, AMIGA POWER, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

DON'T BE SHY...

Show us your mettle! Send us your stuff! There are software prizes are for grabs from the next issue of AMIGA POWER for the best maps and tips and so on that we print. The bigger and better the advice, the bigger and better the software prizes. Note that the quality of map artwork isn't important – but its accuracy is. We pay special attention to any oddities you may have found, or any specific short cuts or daft challenges which prolong the life of Amiga games both old AND new. And remember: there's more to life than cheat modes. Anyone who sends us cheat modes cobbled together from other magazines doesn't stand a chance of winning anything other than a fish in a jiffy bag posted without a stamp.

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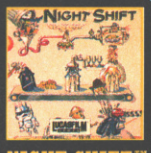

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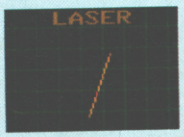
ARMOUR-GEDDON

Inhale the succulent aroma of this most savoury pot roast – erm, pot-pourri – of advice from *Armour-Geddon* authors Ed Scio and Paul Hunter. There's also a cheat mode for complete losers, and the never-before-seen (we think) means of accessing the 'hidden' Object Viewer Thang...

THE WEAPONS

ROCKETS
The rockets are virtually useless on tanks as they have to be fired into the air.



LASERS
The lasers are fine for taking out heavy vehicles but not buildings and the like. NB: It takes rockets, missiles or bombs to destroy power nodes.

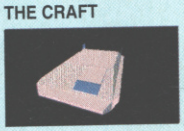
MISSILES
If you feel the need to launch your own missiles when being attacked, don't use your flares – there's a good chance your missiles will go after them instead. But what do you do when an enemy missile's heading in your direction, eh? Try one of these three tipettes for size...

- If you intend to drop flares to attract the missile, do so in a straight line or in as shallow a turn as possible, otherwise there's the possibility of the flare being ignored by the missile.

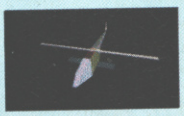
- An alternative is to take advantage of the missile's small fuel supply (about 25 seconds' worth) and the fact that it can't turn very sharply. By flying straight towards the missile then veering off very quickly you should find it shaken off.

- The third option depends on whether there are any mountains in the vicinity. If so, use them as cover - you should find that the missile hits the mountains instead.

THE CRAFT



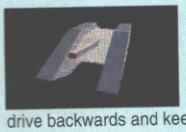
THE HOVERCRAFT
Don't bother with the hovercraft.



THE HELICOPTER
The helicopter's range makes it worthwhile, but it's not the best craft to take on other helicopters. Your best bet is to face the enemy helicopter and stay still when it's closing in for the kill. Wait for it to drop down then let it have it.

THE FIGHTER
The fighter is by far the best craft to use, though it does have a tendency to stall much too easily.

THE BOMBER
If you want to take out teleports and the like from the comfort of the bomber you really need to have the cloaking device (it does use up a lot of fuel though). Incidentally, don't try to carry more than one teleport at a time as the weight of two or three makes the bomber incredibly difficult to fly.



THE TANK
When using the tank, the best way to take out choppers is to drive backwards and keep firing – you can usually hit them quite easily like this.

THE CHEAT MODE

So it's come to this has it? Fine. When in the HQ, access the messages screen. Move the arrow so it points to the first letter of the message highlighted in yellow (Fig 1).

Now hold down the 'Esc' key and press the left-hand mouse button. The message 'YOU WOULDN'T LET IT LIE!' should appear (Fig 2). This indicates that the cheat mode is active. But what does it do? Simple – it makes the player's craft invincible and the supplies of firepower and fuel unlimited.

To turn the cheat mode off (though heavens knows why anyone'd bother – actually, you can't complete *Armour-Geddon* with the cheat mode on, so maybe it's not such a bad idea after all), simply access the message screen again, point to the first letter of the message highlighted in yellow, press and hold down the 'Esc' key and press the left-hand mouse button. The message 'LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT SAUSAGE!' should appear (Fig 3). The cheat mode is now deactivated.

Armour-Geddon also sports a natty Object Editor Thang which allows every item within *Armour-Geddon* to be viewed. To enter the Object Editor Thang, simply use the mouse to move the arrow to the top left-hand corner of the 'secondary' 'title screen' (Fig 5).

Now hold down the left-hand 'SHIFT' key and press the left-hand mouse button to be greeted by a vertical line. This is an object from *Armour-Geddon*. To view the more interesting ones, try using the 'KEYS TO PLEASE'...

To exit the Object Editor Thang, simply press the 'Esc' key or any key from 'F1' to 'F6' to access the relevant section, eg, the HQ screen.

ARMOUR-GEDDON'S OBJECT EDITOR THANG: THE KEYS TO PLEASE

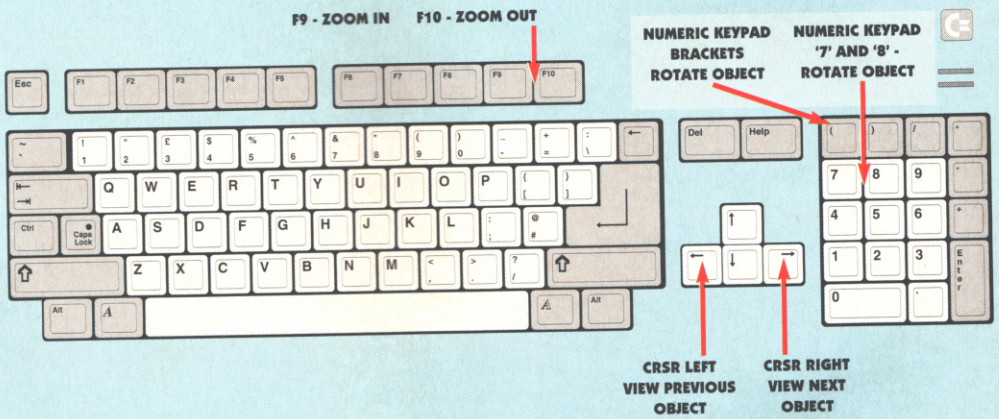


Fig 1: the activation of the cheat mode begins by pointing to the first letter of the yellow message eg DAY 01

Fig 2: confirmation that *Armour-Geddon*'s cheat mode is now active

Fig 3: confirmation that *Armour-Geddon*'s cheat mode is now deactivated

Fig 4: the Object Editor Thang is accessed by first pointing to the top left-hand corner of this screen

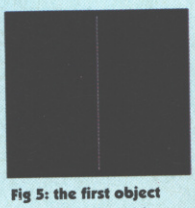


Fig 5: the first object seen when the Object Editor Thang is accessed is this interesting straight line

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ALL I WANT FOR XMAS...

... won't fit on three measly pages in AMIGA POWER, but this'll do for a start! Welcome to the AP Guide to Christmas (or, more specifically, to Christmas *presents*); just put a ring around the bits and pieces you fancy, then leave the magazine lying around the place for potential present buyers to discover...

We don't usually cover hard drives, RAM expansions or the like here in AMIGA POWER, and we don't intend to start now – or at least, we don't intend to make a habit of it. That said, Christmas is the ideal time to get your hands on all those little bits and pieces you meant to buy all year, and many are directly applicable to game playing...

Left to right: Cruiser, 'odd' Tortoise, Bug, Comp Pro

JOYSTICKS AND OTHER GAMES CONTROLLERS

Your first – and most essential – add on purchase, these come in all shapes and sizes (and prices!) meaning there must be ones to suit just about every hand size, playing style and pocket. (Indeed, many people swear by having two or three, one of each sort of game). Prices range from about six or seven quid to £40 plus – though you can get a perfectly decent one for around the £15 mark. Choosing which is such a personal thing we think it's probably best to let you go out and test them for yourselves. Here in the office though, personal favourites include Cheetah's ancient but good value 125+ (£9.99), the adjustable Powerplay Cruiser (from £10.21), and the resilient Competition Pro 5000 (from £12.95). It's normally a good idea to avoid the more garish novelty sticks, though some work well – we've been impressed by Cheetah's tiny hand-held Bug unit (£14.99) recently, for instance.

MAKE YOUR OWN GAMES!

No, seriously – it's not as difficult as it sounds. (That said, it's not easy either – none of us have ever got around to writing a decent game yet!). One way of making it a lot easier is to invest in one of these game creation packages. *3D Construction Kit* allows you to come up with one of those massive Freescape adventure games a la *Castle Master, Driller* et al, while *AMOS* is the only commercially available games language around. You can write proper full price software with it – check out *Builderland* this issue, for instance! – but more often people come up with PD quality shoot-'em-ups and the like. Though useful and fun, both require a degree of programming knowledge to use – not to mention a vast amount of time. *3D Construction Kit* comes in at £49.99, *AMOS* at £34.99ish, while the much simpler *Shoot-'Em-Up Construction Kit* (a better bet if you've never programmed before in your life) *may* still be findable for less. At least you won't be bored over Christmas with one of these!

Build your own games: *AMOS* and *3D CK*

Top mice, left to right: Naksha, Contriver, Golden Image

UPGRADING YOUR MOUSE

One thing it won't take you long to realise about the Amiga – is that the mouse that comes with it is old fashioned and really pretty crap. Don't despair though – all sorts of aftermarket replacements are available, from makers like Naksha, Contriver, Logitech, Golden Image and more. Most of these come in at about £30 (though they go as low as about £15) and which one you get is a real personal preference. (We've got a soft spot for the Naksha range though).

HARD DISKS, RAM EXPANSIONS AND THE LIKE

If your Amiga didn't come with one meg of memory – and only the very newest A500s do – your most essential purchase (joystick not included, of course) has to be an extra half meg. These come in delicate, breakable-looking circuit board affairs which plug into the slot in the bottom of your machine – still, once it's there you'll have little reason to take it out again. These are available from various sources and manufacturers and range from sub £30 upwards. One other way to get extra memory is with a plug-in hard drive, most of which give you an extra half meg automatically, as well as giving you all the usual advantages of a hard disk (allowing you to install multi-disk adventures, word processors and the like). Commodore do the A590 model (£299) but there are plenty of others – our fave is the (rather expensive) GVP Impact II (£499!), a sleek looking affair which has the great advantage of a switch on the top allowing you to disable it at any time (many games don't like loading when you've got a hard drive fitted).

Last, but by no means least, are second disk drives (from £50). All sorts of models are available, but they all make backing up games much less painful, help out on multi-disk adventures etc (etc).

L to r: A590, GVP, AddXtra RAM, second disk drive

AMIGA 500 CARTOON CLASSICS PACK

If you haven't already got one, you'll be needing an Amiga, of course. The pack they're currently pushing is Cartoon Classics, featuring *The Simpsons, Captain Planet, Lemmings*, EA's *Deluxe Paint III* (suddenly no longer such a hot property, with *DP IV* now available), a one meg upgrade, a free copy of Amiga Format and – wait for it! – a totally new Amiga! This is the Amiga 500P (or 'Plus'), originally to have been released next year, though in actual fact models have quietly found their way into Cartoon Classics boxes (see True Stories for details) – any Amiga you buy today is likely to be a Plus. So what's the difference? Well, the A500P is a totally different (and in many ways better) machine – it now has two graphics modes allowing the possibility of better resolution, for instance – though you don't get this without it causing a few problems. Freezer cartridges (Action Replay et al) won't work with it for a start, and some expansions could have problems too, though external hard drives and so on aren't proving any problem. Worse for gameplayers, though, are the compatibility problems – many older games won't work with the new machine, though recent ones should prove no problem. Still, at least the Amiga now comes with one meg as standard, something long overdue in our opinion. Indeed, all in all, many people rate this – the *Captain Planet* game aside – as perhaps the best Amiga bundle yet.

XMAS
special

MAG SUBS

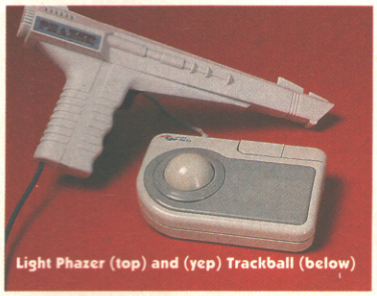
Hey! We've got to get a plug in for ourselves somewhere! You know all about AMIGA POWER, of course – you're reading it, after all – but have you checked out our sister mags, Amiga Shopper and Amiga Format? Shopper is a snip (£1.25!) and comes packed with technical advice, hardware buyers guides and all sorts of adverts for places where you can get stuff cheap, while Format covers every aspect of the Amiga, from games to hardware, and normally has so many pages it could masquerade as a phone book. You can check out our current AP subs offer (and how to get one of our lovely binders!) on page 134 (why haven't you taken one out already?) while you can get the other two from your local newsagent. One word of warning: don't take out an Amiga Format sub if you've got small animals around the house – watch one of these massive things flop through your letter box and you'll see why it's not called a cat-killer for nothing!

Shopper, Format, POWER, binders...

SPECIALIST TASTES

A couple of issues ago we reviewed Trojan's Phazer light gun – the first made to suit your Amiga – and found it fun but of purely short term interest. The quality of light gun controllable software will really have to go up before it becomes an essential purchase. Still, it's novel – and only costs about £40.

Trackballs, however, are a different kettle of fish – many people swear by them as a good alternative to your standard mouse (it works on exactly the same principle, only instead of your motions rubbing the ball across the desktop, here you control things on screen with your hand directly on the moving ball). Golden Image make a couple of good Amiga compatible models for instance, the attractive but slightly un-ergonomic Alfa Data TKB-MT for £29.99 and the better TKB-MT-A for £39.99


Light Phazer (top) and (yep) Trackball (below)

Sexy (well, ish) disk box meets Action Replay II

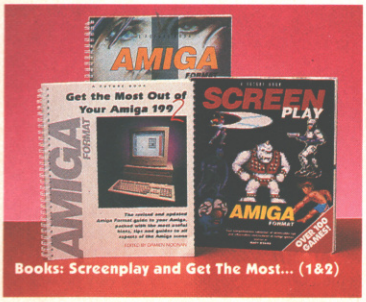
YET MORE USEFUL STUFF

This here's the Action Replay II – which we use in the office – but out now is the essentially similar Action Replay III. You can do all sorts of things with this – from freeze games to detect viruses to create your own POKEs – making it one of the most versatile utilities around. Action Replay III comes in at £59.99 from manufacturers Datel. Keeping it company in this shot is one of our favourite disk boxes. Not much to say about these except they're very useful (from under £10).

AMIGA FORMAT BOOKS

Ideal Christmas presents, these. Amiga Format's Get The Most Out Of Your Amiga – now in a souped up special 1992 edition! – is essential reading for all new (or not so new) Amiga owners. Half the problems you'll ever come across are explained and cured here.

Equally essential is Amiga Format's Screenplay book – packed to the natty ring binders (so you can lie it flat on your desk) with hints, tips and cheats for just about every Amiga game imaginable. Both books come at £9.95, while Screenplay Part 2 – a totally new book – will be available any day now. And an AMIGA POWER book? Well, we're thinking about it...

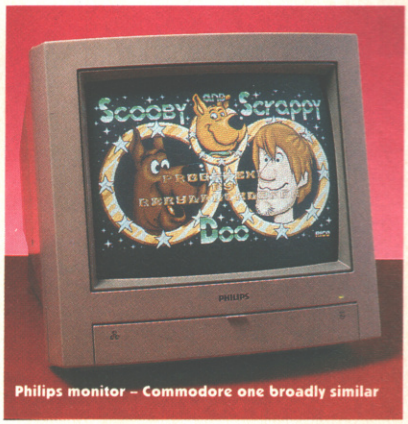


Books: Screenplay and Get The Most... (1&2)

MONITORS

Sooner or later you'll want a monitor to go with your Amiga instead of a TV – the way it's connected to your Amiga gives a clearer, sharper signal (if you want to get technical, it's because you're getting an RGB signal coming from your Amiga instead of an RF or composite signal). There are two monitors available for your Amiga – the Commodore 1084 (the latest model of which, the D1, is £269) and the Philips CM8833/11 for about £10 cheaper. Which one you buy really depends on which you like the look of best – there's little difference in performance, and, indeed, for a long time they were basically the same unit in different casings! – though we tend to swing towards the Philips model for looks.

That said, you might actually be able to pick up the Commodore model cheaper in many shops – it seems to be getting discounted more often.



Philips monitor – Commodore one broadly similar

GAMES COMPILATIONS

The other big thing for Christmas is, of course, games compilations. These come in all shapes and sizes, flood the stores at Xmas, provide undeniably good value, and are bound to end up at the bottom of your bed come Xmas morning. In fact, they're such an Xmas essential we've got a separate feature on them over the page...

Xmas compilations: for your complete guide, flick the page...

Access

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Star LC - 20	£150
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A500 Basic Amiga	£295
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ACCESSORIES

Amiga Daatascan Professional	£145.00	AT Once PC Emulator	£199.00
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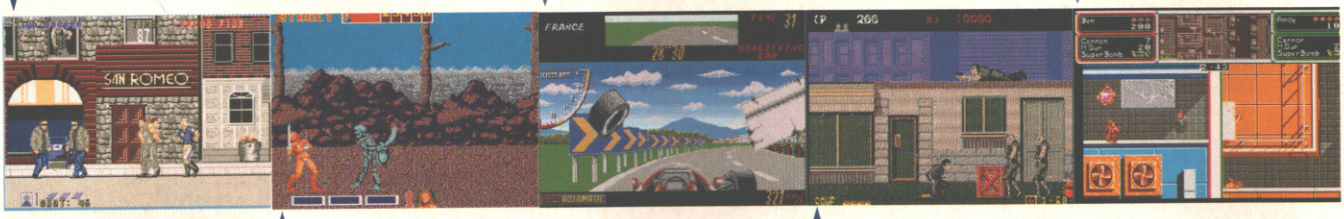
AP

SUPER SEGA (US Gold, £29.99)

E-SWAT
Atrocious conversion of an uninspiring coin-op, this is a complete duffer in almost every way. If you buy the compilation, don't even bother loading this one up. *

SUPER MONACO GP
Nothing like the stunning arcade game at all, but a decent enough racing game in the *Continental Circus* vein. A couple of irritating design features, but basically pretty respectable. ***

CRACKDOWN
Flawless copy, not-bad game to start with, a recipe for compilation success? You bet – it was lacking a bit at full-price, but for £6 you can't complain at all about this one. ***



GOLDEN AXE
Very close to the coin-op, this is about as good as this type of beat-'em-up ever gets. Pretty and violent, but maybe a little too easy for most players. ****

SHINOBI
Technically crap and a bit on the easy side, but still an enjoyable and accurate copy of the reasonably entertaining original. Worth a go. **

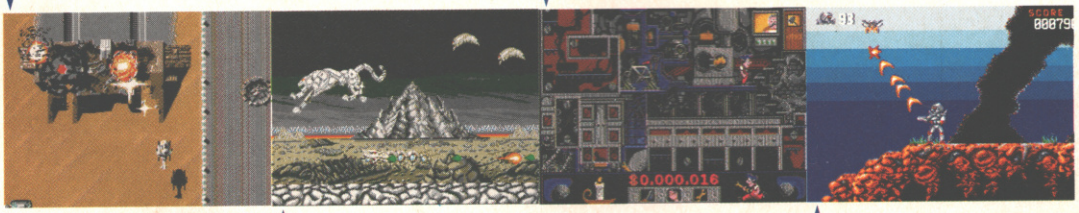
VERDICT: A respectable mixed bag, with lots of acceptable games at a fair price. (And *E-SWAT*). 73%

TOGETHER
ECLECTIC TE

MAX (US Gold, £29.99)

SWIV
Gorgeous and tough vertically-scrolling slaughterfest that's *still* the best game the genre's seen. Still good value at full price, so don't miss it here. *****

NIGHT SHIFT
Enjoyable but slightly confusing arcade game from the makers of the world's best adventures. Good frantic fun but it won't last forever – you're likely to get just a bit too frustrated before long. ***



VERDICT: Incredible value for money. Four very good games for £7.50 each, you just can't go wrong. 90%

ST DRAGON
Different-looking horizontal scroller with an imaginative touch in the central character. We still can't get past the second level, so lots of lastability is assured. A goodie. ****

TURRICAN II
Hugely successful but uninspiring sequel to the original *Turrican*. Massive area to explore, but you'll probably get bored before you've seen half of it. A bargain at the price, though. ***

SUPER SIM PACK (US Gold, £29.99)

INTERNATIONAL 3D TENNIS
Beautifully-presented tennis game with gorgeous sound, but rather let down by a lack of speed and some wobbly physics in the ball movement. Brave but flawed. **

CRAZY CARS II
Truly execrable driving game with almost certainly the worst car control ever seen in the genre. Unplayable crap that would shame a PD library.*

VERDICT: No standouts, a couple of duffers – you can really do an awful lot better than this. 37%

ITALY 1990
This quite respectable footy game was the best of the World Cup efforts last year, but it's far too easy for all but younger players. Still good fun, though.***

AIRBORNE RANGER
Dreadful attempt by MicroProse at a *Commando*-style arcade game completely swamped in over-complication and disk accessing. A bum deal at any price.*

R IN TEAMS

It's the AMIGA POWER Christmas compilation review extravaganza!

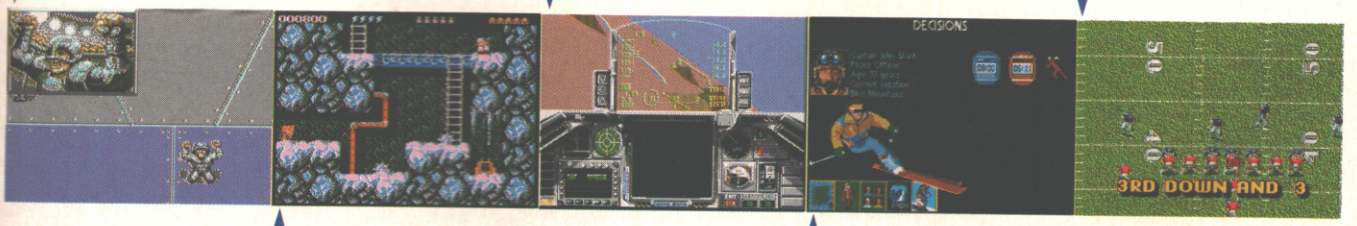
Up and down the country, shelves are starting to groan under giant-boxed, multi-disk compilation packs of oldies, goldies and, um, mouldies just waiting to be bought by kindly grannies, wrapped in paper with snowflakes on and stacked under slowly-shedding Christmas trees. But how are you – and more to the point, your kindly granny – going to find your way through the Christmas compilation jungle? With the AMIGA POWER Buyer's Guide of course...

THE TOP LEAGUE (Ubi Soft, £30.99)

SPEEDBALL 2
Superb, violent future sport game that's No. 3 in our All-Time Top 100 and deservedly so. If 'We Love You' by the Rolling Stones was a game, it'd be this one. *****

FALCON
Good flight sim, getting on a bit but as playable as it ever was. One of the genre's most enduring games, and extremely good value at this price. ***

TV SPORTS FOOTBALL
Beautifully-presented but incredibly bitty sim of the American game. The TV-style presentation (surprise!) is great, but the amount of disk swapping and accessing really brings it down. Still, it made No.86 in our Top 100. **



RICK DANGEROUS 2
Hugely popular platformer, dragged down a bit by heavy reliance on unfair danger, but still just about the best of its kind. Stuart hates it, but maybe that's just him. ***

MIDWINTER
Uneventful and bugged strategy epic, but good stuff to sit down with over the Christmas holidays when there's nothing on the telly – it'll while away a whole day in no time. ***

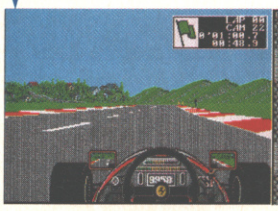
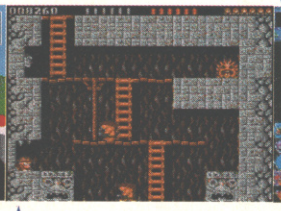
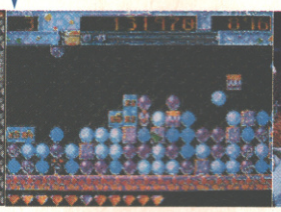
VERDICT: A confused bundle of the dazzling and the dull, but okay. 74%

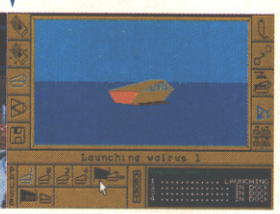
10 GREAT GAMES (Ubi Soft, £30.99)

FERRARI F1
This 'interesting' precursor to MicroProse's *Formula One Grand Prix* features a bizarre 'steer the road' control mechanism, but that's it's only noteworthy attribute. And even that's dreadful. *

PICK'N'PILE
An interesting combination of *Puzznic* and *Boulder Dash*, but this 'remove the coloured blocks' puzzle game doesn't have the lasting appeal of either of them. **

CARRIER COMMAND
Our All-Time No. 15, *Carrier Command* is really Number One in a field of one. No other game since has quite captured the majestic, gripping atmosphere of this ocean-going classic. *****



RICK DANGEROUS
No. 71 in the All-Time Top 100, this horribly frustrating platform game is still one of the Amiga's most-loved games ever. Avoid unless you've got the patience of a saint, though. ***

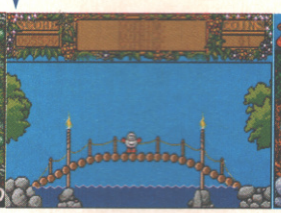
NIGHT HUNTER
Semi-comedic vampire-based platformy kind of French thing. Sound good to you? No, we didn't think so. Might have been okay in 1989, but not now. *

DIZZY COLLECTION (CodeMasters, £24.99)

KWIK SNAX
Previously unreleased, this *Pengo*-ish arcade puzzley game is tricky, pretty and entertaining, and that's about all there is to it. Well worth a go. ****

TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY
The first Amiga incarnation of the Codies' staggeringly popular egg hero, this is a beautiful arcade adventure made just a wee bit too mean by the provision of only one life. ****

MAGICLAND DIZZY
Only just released at full-price, *Magicland Dizzy* scored an impressive 84% in issue seven, which should tell you all you need to know. A little formulaic, though. ****



VERDICT: Not much of a saving on the original prices, but a fine introduction to the egg hero. 70%

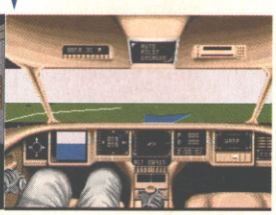
FAST FOOD
A strikingly pretty *Pac-Man*-like maze game with bright cartoony graphics and lots of lovely presentation touches. A lot tougher than it first seems, too. ****

FANTASY WORLD DIZZY
Bigger and a little deeper than *Treasure Island*, *Fantasy World* is one of the longest-lived games ever in the Amiga charts, and indeed it's still in our Gallup Top 10. A budget classic. *****

QUEST FOR ADVENTURE (US Gold, £34.99)

OPERATION STEALTH
No. 46 in the All-Time Top 100, this Delphine game is a classic adventure which does away with all that boring typing lark. A great plot makes for a great game, and here that's true more than ever. ****

MEAN STREETS
"Good solid entertainment, a bit like Lenny Henry", says the Bottom Line entry for this, and that sounds about right. Suffers slightly from 'jack-of-all-trades' syndrome. ***

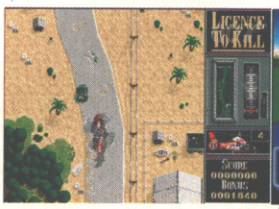


VERDICT: A couple of real classics and a bit of a filler; not too bad by any means, but £5 too dear. 72%

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE
Until the release of *Monkey Island* this was the best adventure available for the Amiga, so now it's, er, the second best adventure available for the Amiga. Our All Time No. 28. *****

JAMES BOND COLLEC

LICENCE TO KILL
Pretty but duff collection of sub-games from sections of the movie, hampered by crap control and thin gameplay. More Casino Royale than Licence To Kill, actually. **



THE
Spy Hun
graphics
Definitely
movie lic

LIVE A LET
Decidedly a *Road Bl*
Boy clone w little to
movie. Not b as far as
we're not loo weeks o

SUPERSKI
Previously known as *Eddie Edwards' Super Ski*, this superfast skiing game (surprise!) captures the feel of the piste better than anything else. Not that there's much competition. ***

PRO TENNIS TOUR
Passable tennis sim with lots of options but rather shaky control when it comes to actually hitting the ball, which is a pretty major aspect of the game. **

VERDICT: What this lacks in quality it more or less makes up for in quantity. Not a bad buy on the whole. 77%

SATAN
Strongly reminiscent of US Gold's coin-op conversion *Black Tiger* but not as good, this uninspiring platform hack-'em-up is the kind of game the word 'mediocre' was invented for. **

CHICAGO 90
The chance of formatting the disk containing this godawful driving/shooting/vomiting effort will be an offer you don't want to refuse. *

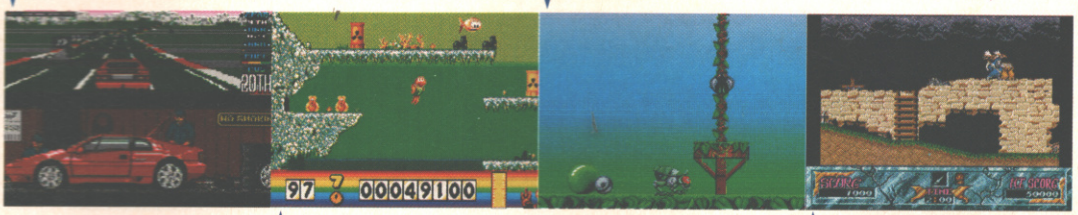
XENON 2
The Ed's favourite shoot-'em-up ever, but let's face it kids, in 1991 *Xenon 2* just doesn't cut the mustard. Nice graphics and sound but crap gameplay, this one's been left behind. **

CHART ATTACK (Gremlin, £29.99)

LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE
Fabby driving game which is better in quite a few respects than its illustrious recent sequel, although the half-screen one-player mode is a bit of a bummer. *****

VENUS THE FLYTRAP
Elegant platform shoot-'em-up with lovely graphics, but it's a bit short on adrenalin-pumping thrills. No. 84 in our All-Time Top 100. ***

VERDICT: Good solid stuff, but a bit slow-paced as a whole. 72%



JAMES POND
Fairly average platform escapade with seriously cute graphics concealing slightly flat gameplay. Lots of nice touches though, and good fun for a while. ***

GHOULS'N'GHOSTS
Another Top 100 game (No. 97), this corking coin-op conversion is also available on US Gold's *CapCom Collection*, where it's probably a better bargain. ***

COLLECTION (Domark, £29.99)

THE SPY WHO LOVED ME
Spy Hunter-inspired game with gorgeous, tiny graphics and a real feel for the subject matter. Definitely the best Bond game, and one of the better movie licences of any kind. ****

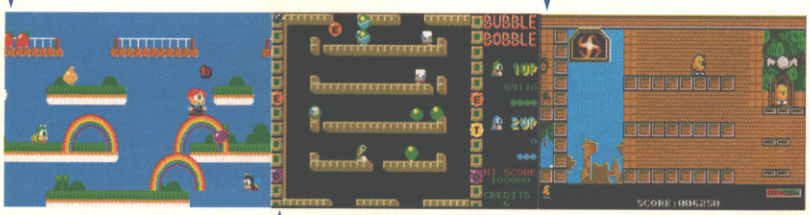
...VE AD LET DIE
...cidedly ave... *Road Blasters/Buggy* ...r clone wi... ...ittle to do with the ...vie. Not ba... ...s far as it goes, but ...re not loo... ...weeks of play here. ***

VERDICT: One good, one okay, one bad. Pretty mediocre. 50%

RAINBOW COLLECTION (Addicted To Fun, £19.99)

RAINBOW ISLANDS
The official AMIGA POWER No. 1 Amiga game of all time. Need we say more? Oh, okay then, anyone who doesn't have a copy of this yet is stupider than a thousand Edd The Ducks. *****

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY
Brilliant platform adventure with a cast of thousands, all of them so loveable you'll hate yourself for killing them. Well, almost. Cuter than a box of frogs and twice as much fun. *****



BUBBLE BOBBLE
Corking arcade game that works best with two players, but it's still pretty entertaining with one. Misses the coin-op's secret features, but includes all 100 levels. A winner. ****

VERDICT: Three of the best games ever for only £20 – a gift or what? 93%

2 HOT 2 HANDLE (Addicted To Fun, £19.99)

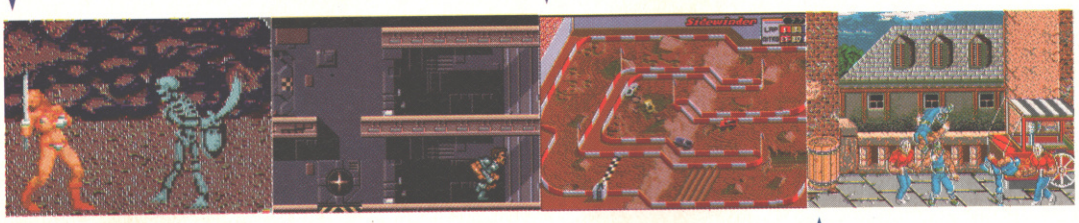
GOLDEN AXE

No. 96 in the AMIGA POWER All-Time Top 100, this Sega arcade beat-'em-up is a good version of the hugely popular coin-op and pretty respectable in its own right. Good solid compilation fodder. ****

SUPER OFF-ROAD RACER

Excellent *Super Sprint*-style racing game (No. 35 in the All-Time Top 100), which is practically arcade-perfect in true Graftgold style. We're missing these boys already. *****

VERDICT: Not outstanding, but at £20 the two good games just about carry the duffers. 68%



TOTAL RECALL

Absolutely awful movie licence which epitomises all that's worst about the 'lots-of-little-sub-games-adding-up-to-sod-all' school of film games. No feel for the movie at all, either. *

SHADOW WARRIORS

Great copy of a pretty hopeless arcade beat-'em-up, the phrase "only for fans of the coin-op" springs inevitably to mind. Far too hard for the average gamer. **

AIR SEA SUPREMACY (Ubi Soft, £30.99)

GUNSHIP

Once regarded as a milestone of flight simulation, this helicopter game is still fun, but it's seen better days. Good, but a bit dated in these days of *Thunderhawk* and *F-15 Strike Eagle 2*. **

P-47

Excellent shoot-'em-up in the *R-Type* style, distinguished by some particulary beautiful graphics and a 'friendly' power-up system. ****

SILENT SERVICE

It goes without saying that action fans won't go for this, so we won't say that. What we'll say instead is "A gripping and tense sub sim that'll have you sucking your cornflakes". ***

VERDICT: Traditional compilation fare, a jumble of winners and might-have-beens. Reasonable. 69%

CARRIER COMMAND

Again? If there's one thing you can say about all these Christmas compilations, it's that, er, they've nearly all got *Carrier Command* in them. Which is fine by us. *****

WINGS

Another bone of contention in the AMIGA POWER office, *Wings* is loved by some of us, and hated by others. If you've got a second disk drive though, it's not a bad effort at all. ***

CAPCOM COLLECTION (US Gold, £29.99)

STRIDER

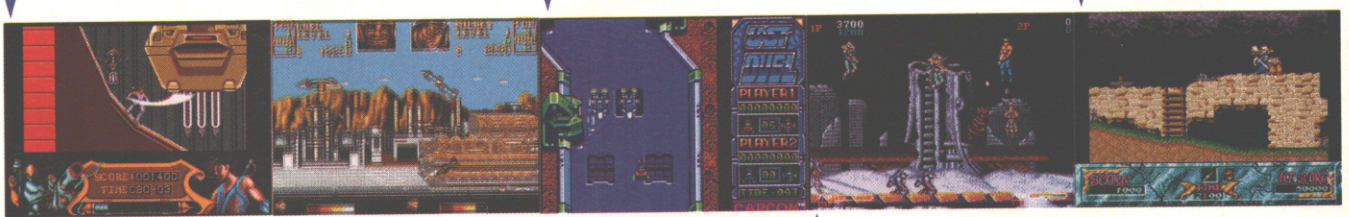
Really looking its age these days, the *Strider* conversion contains pretty much everything from the original, but the tiny graphics just don't convey the coin-op's spectacular drama. ***

LAST DUEL

Similar to *LED Storm* in some ways, but more shoot-'em-uppy and rather more fun. Not remarkable in any way, but fun for a quick blast now and again. ***

GHOULS'N'GHOST

Fine conversion of the original, although the simplified graphics let it down a bit. Scores very highly on the old gameplay-meter all the same, though. ***



UN SQUADRON

Pretty excellent shoot-'em-up in the *R-Type* vein, distinguished by lovely console-style presentation and great graphics. Definitely the star of this pack. ****

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

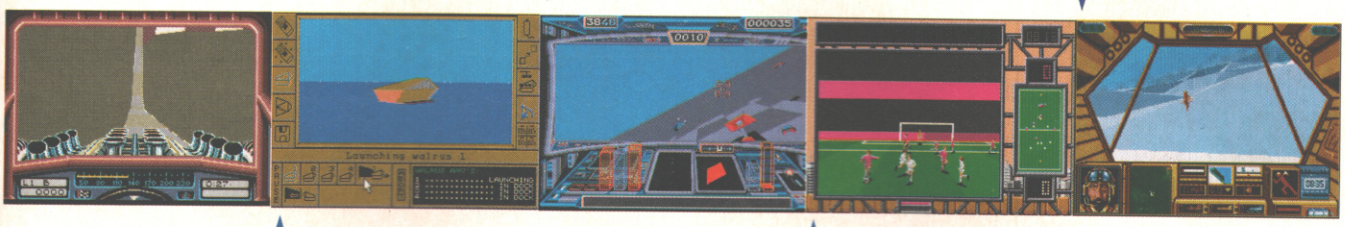
Pretty horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up which is fairly entertaining except for the terrible control system. Fun for a while. **

VIRTUAL REALITY 1 (Elite, £34.99)

STUNT CAR RACER
Just sneaking in at the bottom end of our All-Time Top 10, this unforgiving driving-on-top-of-a-rollercoaster sim is another one of the Amiga's most-loved games ever. The AP office is split on it too – some of us love it, others it bores stupid. Still... *****

STARGLIDER 2
Yet another Top 100 game (one of four on this compilation), *Starglider 2* took filled vectors further than ever before – into a classic strategic shoot-'em-up in fact. Showing its age a little, though. ***

MIDWINTER
If you loved *Lords Of Midnight* but couldn't stand all the razor-edge tension and frenzied action, this might just be the game for you. It certainly isn't the game for us... ***



VERDICT: Lots of big names, but not much that's actually that great to play. At £35, think twice. 67%

CARRIER COMMAND
If a life on the ocean wave is really this much fun, you can sign us up for the navy right now. Awesome, epic strategy with superb blasting action and mini-flight sim fun thrown in. Love it. *****

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER CHALLENGE
A brave attempt at football-from-the-goalkeeper's-viewpoint, but this was just to slow to be very much fun, and it had no real soccer feel either. File under 'nice try, but no cigar'. **

SUPERHEROES (Domark, £29.99)

THE SPY WHO LOVED ME
Cool collection of sub-games which are, for once, halfway respectable in their own right. You'd be better off getting it in *The James Bond Collection* though. ****

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE
Not the superb Lucasfilm adventure, this is is fact a horribly dull and frustrating arcade platform game and should be avoided at all costs. Nice airship 'wobble' movement though. **

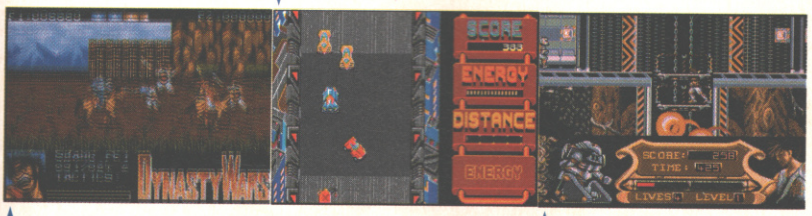
VERDICT: One decent game, and you can get it elsewhere. Why fork out £10 each for the rest? 48%

LAST NINJA 2
Undoubtedly the worst of the *Last Ninja* series, *LN2* suffers from one of the most horrendous control systems imaginable. The graphics are lovely, but so what? *

STRIDER 2
Uninspired and unimaginative 'unofficial' follow-up to the coin-op licence, *Strider II* isn't actually bad, it's just so mediocre that it'll depress you to death long before you finish Level Two. **

LED STORM
Crap vertically-scrolling driving game that's really more of a memory test than anything else. Bland graphics don't help matters, but the game's beyond saving anyway. *

VERDICT: A lot of games for your money, and enough decent ones to make this a worthwhile buy. 76%



DYNASTY WARS
Completely appalling Oriental scrolling beat-'em-up of sorts, almost totally bereft of gameplay. Looks reasonably nice, but it's dire. *

STRIDER 2
This sequel never appeared in the arcades, and it's just as well. Over-hard and unexciting-looking, you'd put 20p in it once and never play it again. **

AND THAT'S NOT ALL!
Believe it or not, this little only scratches the surface of the compilations available this Christmas – though most of the others have been on sale for some time now and will be far less prominent in the shops. Newies not covered here include Domark's *TNT 2*, the contents of which hadn't been finalised at time of writing, and their new *Superheroes* pack (ditto). Still, if you want to know how good the individual games on these are, we suggest you start with The Bottom Line... ●

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GAME REVIEWS CONTINUED

**Welcome to the second AMIGA POWER reviews section.
PD games, budgies, full pricers – you want 'em, you got 'em!**

FATE – GATES OF DAWN

Trudging through the forest, our party of one is confronted by a (not very menacing) snake. Time to call on some of those wonderful Amazon women...

Publisher: Rainbow Arts
Price: £29.99
Author: Olaf Patzenhauer and others
Release: Out now

It seems we're in another "Urgh – looks a bit complicated and boring. Jonathan? Jonathan. (Heh heh)" situation, so here I am once again valiantly trying to feign interest in a genre which would reduce lesser reviewers to jelly. Fortunately, toughed by years of this sort of abuse, my skills are such that for the next few hundred words only the trained eye could tell me apart from a genuine role-playing game fan.

Fate – Gates of Dawn is a role-playing game. If the title doesn't tell you that much, the lists of numbers in the back of the manual certainly will. What's more, it does little to cover up the fact presentation-wise. You've got your standard *Dungeon Master* 3D window showing the view ahead. Then there are the usual boxes containing your characters' faces, which can be clicked on to swap between them. At the bottom of the screen is a text window where messages occasionally appear, although they tend to scroll off again before you get a chance to read them. And to round it all off there's the familiar set of arrows which are clicked on to move your party around.

The plot will hardly come as a revelation, either. Once again you find yourself charged with the task of defeating the Lord of Darkness (or someone), but with no suggestion as to how you're meant to set about it. For some reaon, though, you feel that the best way might be to roam the land recruiting new party members, hacking baddies to bits, collecting treasure and solving puzzles, so that's just what you do. For a change, however, you're not trapped in a dungeon with a sealed door behind you. Instead you find yourself wandering around a forest, depicted by some tasty 3D graphics. You'll also notice some really quite tremendous sound effects, which keep you informed of everything from the weather to the presence of snakes in the grass or the approach of fellow beings. These usually turn out to be beggars or robbers, or perhaps wandering mages, but every so often you'll bump into one of the most (if you'll excuse the momentary loss of self-restraint) unbelievably horny women ever seen on the Amiga. I immediately set about recruiting a gang of Amazons, novice witches and priestesses, and together we set off in search of the cities that are the game's other main feature. There you'll find pubs, inns, shops, temples and all sorts of other handy amenities. The cities are linked by a series of paths and also a railway, and according to the instructions the transport system also stretches to ships (although I never came across any).

And that's about the size of it, really. Criticisms? The menus used to pick commands from are a bit on the small side, making it easy to pick the wrong one by mistake; it keeps flashing 'Disk Access' up on the screen every time it, erm, accesses the disk (which it frequently does); and the whole thing's got a resolutely two-dimensional feel to it (despite the 3D graphics). Apart from that it's an enjoyable role-playing romp, with a mammoth playing area, nice graphics, plenty of characters to 'interact' with (if you know what I mean) and lots to do generally.

(There – had you fooled, eh?)

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Really it's just another fantasy RPG, but one with enough attractive features (and women) to raise it above the mire. Enjoyable for fans.
70 PERCENT

UNDER PRESSURE

***Under Pressure* – the game which led the invention of the word 'Psygnosisesque'. (And that's its best feature really).**

Publisher Electronic Zoo
Author Eldritch the Cat
Price £25.99
Release Out now

A 'tribute' going on here, I think. This horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up from star programming geezers Eldritch The Cat (best known for the fab *Projectyle*) owes so much in feel to Psygnosis games in general and *Shadow Of The Beast* in particular, that I suspect it's all been done as some giant practical joke. 'Giant' is certainly a word that's applicable in other areas here, as the main sprite's easily the biggest I've seen for quite some time, but unfortunately 'joke' is also a highly apt term for a game which is the crappiest load of crappy old crap I've been forced at gunpoint to play all month. There's no getting away from the fact that it's dreadful, and the main reason for that is that there is no actual game in here.

Your huge sprite lumbers along through an uneventful landscape, shooting the odd baddie and dodging the odd laser beam fired from the ceiling (a good way to avoid all the lasers on Level One is to keep the joystick held to the right all the way through the level without stopping, tip fans). Occasionally there's a pit or

SSI takes a sideway... SHA...

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £27.99
Author: Graham Lilley
Release: Out now

Bob Malin, US Gold's D&D man, told us back in issue six, "With *Shadow Sorcerer* we've tried to make things more accesible to the average gamesplayer." Mmmm.

The problem with producing any computer version of D&D is that its just such a huge concept, everything is open-ended, and so the possibilities are limitless. SSI know this, and so what they generally try to do with all their various D&D licences is select various elements from the concept, then mix them together in differing amounts, and with different forms of presentation. Remember *Eye Of The Beholder*? Of course you do. Well, that was a Dungeons & Dragons game which concentrated very much on the maze and combat aspects of D&D.

Something like the forthcoming *Ultima VI* (although its not actually a D&D licence) leans far more heavily on wargame-style combat, subtle puzzles, and large scale exploration, using, as it does, an entire world as its playground.

Then we come to *Shadow Sorcerer*, which is a different kettle of fish entirely (and will somebody please tell me what fish are doing in a kettle?).

Anybody vaguely familiar with D&D will know that some players utilise painted lead minatures when playing. This helps when combat is being played out, as everybody is given a clear representation of just where their characters are at any particular point. This is the aspect which *Shadow Sorcerer* concentrates on, offering 'computer-assisted' control over four fully animated characters in close-quarters situations. In addition to this 3D isometric representation of the play area, *Shadow Sorcerer* also uses a large-scale hex-map to depict the less interesting bits.

The basic gist of the game, then, is something like this. Four characters are selected from a roster of sixteen.

Special events throw up little cameo screens such as this one. The request to refer to passages from the manual is unusual to say the least. I suppose it makes piracy that bit more awkward.

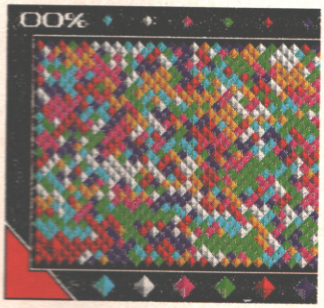
The hex map depicts the progress of the main band of heroes (plus their entourage of refugees). It's the constant jumping to and from this screen which lets the game down quite badly.

something exciting like that to cross, and after five or six minutes you'll reach Level Two, which is largely the same but with different graphics. Throughout this involving and demanding experience you'll encounter lots of static baddies which you can kill by standing out of their reach and firing a lot, and lots of sections where the screen dimensions force you to take a leap into the unknown in search of the next bit of floor. It's almost as if old Eldritch deliberately set out to satirize Psygnosis' tendency towards games with lovely graphics and no gameplay, and if so they've done a great job of it. Literally incredible.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

THE BOTTOM LINE
And people said *Rodland* lacked depth? Maybe this is just too clever for me, maybe I'm missing something really important. But d'you know, I doubt it.
12 PERCENT

7 COLORS



Bizarre, complex, French, and definitely, definitely featuring more than six colours – yes, it's Infogrames' *7 Colors*.

Publisher: Infogrames
Price: £19.99
Author: Gamos
Release: Out now

Diamonds are a girl's best friend, they say. Unfortunately that's the only diamonds-related opening line I can think of, but it'll have to do as *7 Colors* is based, by and large, on diamonds. Whole screenloads of them. *7 Colors* is a puzzle game, you see, and perhaps the next obvious step is for me to try and explain what you have to do.

To start off with, all the diamonds are different colors (sorry, colours). You start off 'owning' one of them, in the bottom left-hand corner. What you have to do to score points is 'annex' adjacent diamonds by changing the colour of your first diamond to match them. You can choose any color you like as long as it's different from your opponent's (who's trying to do much the same thing, starting in the opposite corner), and all diamonds of that colour that are touching diamonds you already own become yours. The aim is to take over 50 percent of the screen.

I know it's a bit of a crap explanation, but at least it's better than the one in the manual. Then again, anything would be as there they don't even *try* to explain it – you're just meant to work it out by yourself. This doesn't take long, but even so, eh?

The graphics are, well, diamond-shaped and the sound consists of either effects or some astonishingly repetitive music. What really matters, though, is whether it works as a game. For the first few goes it does, and once you've worked out what's happening and 'strategies' have become apparent its gets very addictive. After a few games, however, it becomes increasingly obvious that success depends more on luck, and the original layout of the screen, than skill. (This applies whether you're playing against the computer or a puzzle-gaming chum.) Then it starts getting boring.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Sort of alrightish, but still not really worth the reduced asking price. It's not even noticably weird.
47 PERCENT

ays

tep with this D&D game, go icon crazy, and get all graphic and hexagonal on us.

DOW SORCERER

These characters can then be moved from cell to cell on the hex map, with a band of refugees following (usually, anyway) somewhere behind. If a new location is remotely interesting, the game will pop up a brief description, then switch to the close-up 3D isometric view. This is the screen where all fighting, spellcasting, object manipulation and puzzle solving takes place. Occasional animated cameos also crop up from time to time, usually when the refugees hold a conference, a dwarven king gives an audience or another such occasion.

If this all sounds just a little disjointed to you, then you understand my problem with this game. That's not to say I didn't enjoy it. It does have some good points. The graphics are up to par (except for the map screen), the plot is a nice change from the usual hack-and-slay fare, and its possible to get quite attatched to the characters (particularly if the Dragonlance scenario is your kind of scene). Even the control system offers a nice change, making quite a range of commands accessible from the mouse. SSI have taken great care to offer something very different from their usual stuff. But...

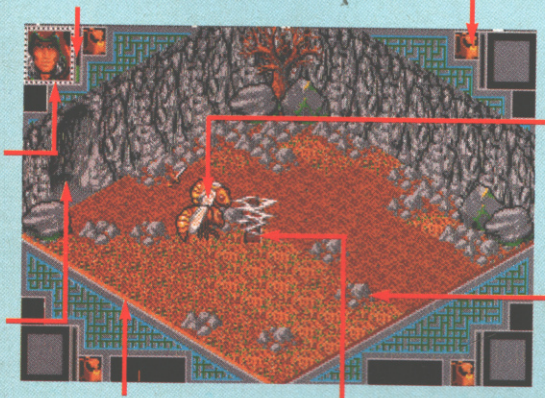
When compared to the simple but nonetheless enjoyable *Hero Quest*, *Shadow Sorcerer* just comes across as trying to be too many things to too many people. *Hero Quest* sticks to the 3D view to give coherence, and although the fighting is a bit naff, the exploration and puzzle solving aspects really gel with the easy-to-get-into approach.

Much as I like the combat (the opportunity to pre-plan each character's strategy or do everything by mouse clicks is novel, and actually works well), and much as I appreciate the chance to have some nifty 3D graphics, the phrase 'just doesn't gel' keeping ringing in my mind. Constantly swapping between map and action levels ruins the flow of gameplay. I can't help feeling that *Shadow Sorcerer* would have been in the *Eye Of The Beholder* league if only they'd used the 3D view at all times, reduced the size of the play area, added a scrolling routine, put more variation in locations and monsters (particularly when they're all of a similiar graphic size), and added a message bar to explain the use of icons and describe events without holding things up. As it stands though, it's nowhere near as good as *Beholder*, which is a shame – these changes wouldn't have been too hard to implement, now would they?

● *MARK RAMSHAW*

SPELL IT OUT

Forget mastering sorcery – it's the icons which need to be studied.



THE BOTTOM LINE
For a game which is aimed at the masses, *Shadow Sorcerer* has far too many hardcore D&D-head traits in there. *Hero Quest* may not be anywhere near as deep, but it's the one the kids will prefer. And the D&D freaks? Well, they'll probably aim for something a bit more ambitious.
71 PERCENT

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FOOTBALL DIRECTOR II (REVAMPED)

This is actually the only screen with graphics in *Football Director II* – there's no actual match to watch at all. This certainly ain't *Kick Off* territory.

Publisher: D&H Games
Price: £24.99
Authors: John De Salis and Tony Huggard
Release: Out now

Alright, all you smirking football-management-game haters. Scram and get lost. There'll be none of the usual gratuitous teasing of soccer strategy in this review, no whinging about elementary BASIC programming, and definitely no whining about blocky graphics. I don't care if I'm the only person in Amigadom to still play these things, I'll still stand up and proudly say "Yes, I play soccer management games and what's more, I bloomin' well like 'em".

Mind you, I'd have to be pretty fanatical not to admit that the fortunes of footy power games have slumped alarmingly over the past two or three years. The trouble is, these games have hardly progressed since the number-juggling glory days of *Football Manager* and the original *Football Director* in the early 1980s. Okay, so Anco's *Kick Off*-ish *Player Manager* tried to be different, with an ambitiously sophisticated game system and dreamy graphics, but the game didn't quite hang together, and, anyway, it was a real one-off – the idea of doing something interesting with management has simply failed to be followed up since.

That was two years ago. Now – at last! – we've got something new that promises to incorporate reasonably complex gameplay with sweet graphics and still work without being plagued by bugs and inconsistencies. The game is management specialists D&H Games' upgraded version of their three-year-old *Football Director II*, and – I hate to say it – it's disappointingly ragged.

Football Director II now includes a few extra options – such as the ability to see what's going on in European competitions and other leagues – and there's a reasonably user-friendly game environment, but none of this has made the gameplay any more interesting. The trouble is, *Football Director II* really needed a total revamped, not just to get cosmetically touched up.

It would be too tedious to bang on about every sub-standard aspect of the game, but (suffice to say) it offers little that wasn't available half a decade ago. A real disappointment for those of us who were hoping for something exceptional – not even the patronage of us die-hard footy freaks will sustain much more of this stuffy repetition.

● *COLIN CAMPBELL*

THE BOTTOM LINE
A disappointing affair which doesn't really offer anything new. Fans of the genre will not be impressed, and everybody else will need little warning to stay away.
55 PERCENT

Gremlin serve up another slice of console-esqe action, but it sure ain't *Switchblade II*...

PEGASUS

The storm rages on as our horseless hero battles with a giant crocodile mutant thing. It's at around this point that the limitations of the combat system become a pain.

Publisher: Gremlin
Price: £25.99
Authors: Optimus Software
Release: Out now

Two things are obvious about *Pegasus* right from the off. One, this game was never really designed to be the pinnacle of Amiga software, and two, the scenario is complete hogwash. Instead of giving you a whole load of headaches about lands ravaged by evil, and the good wizard Chan, then, (I'm sure you can guess most of it) I'll get down to the business of actually reviewing the thing instead. Hey, ho, here we go.

Pegasus is primarily a right-to-left scrolling blast through five distinct lands (desert, swamp, ice, war and hell), each ten levels in length. Nothing outstanding so far. But its trump card is the fact that these levels alternate between a flying sequence (where you're mounted on a flying horse of course, hence the title) and a platform-ish running and sword swinging bit. So for the money, Gremlin give us an *Nemesis*/*R-Type* variant and a *Black Tiger* sort of affair. And though neither level is really spectacular enough to stand up on its own, put together they offer an intriguing proposition.

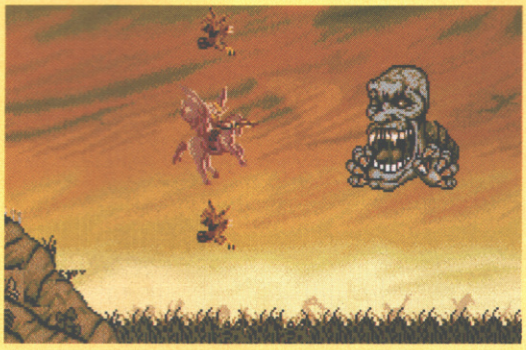
Despite the pretensions to mythology and the olde worlde scenery, this is a game of power ups and wave upon wave of attackers. Shoot-'em-ups like this stand and fall on how well the attack waves have been designed, and despite the fact that it's been improved since we first saw it, there's still too much looseness about to be ideal. There's not really enough strategy involved in the way you move, and the nasties are just to small and fast to be massively avoidable. The fact that a number of collisions are allowed before a life is lost reinforces the feeling that progress is more a matter of luck than joystick skill.

Although the most simplistic, the platform level is probably the most fun. Not only does the landscape scroll, but a flip-screen system is used for vertical movement, giving more of an arcade-adventure feel (though movement is always to the right, so it's not as if there's much exploring to be done). Compare this sequence though (with its incredibly poor sword-fighting system) to *First Samurai*'s sword-swinging antics and it starts to look more than a little bit dated.

And yet, *Pegasus* does offer a fair amount of enjoyment. The beautiful backgrounds are worth persevering for, the scenery for the Hell levels being particularly outstanding. And the limited continue facility is a boon. But in the end *Pegasus* feels more like a pot-boiler than one of Gremlin's premier products. I guess not every game can be a real corker.

● *MARK RAMSHAW*

A sphere of flame engulf man and flying horse both, indicating dual death in a very major way.



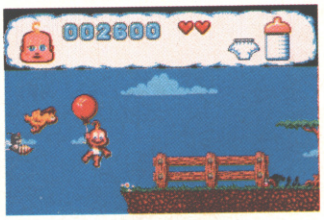
Pegasus swoops over the gorgeous, but foreboding swampland. Parallax scrolling is used to full effect with several layers of beautiful graphics.

THE BOTTOM LINE
Perhaps if *Pegasus* was a fiver cheaper then I could recommend it. For this sort of price though, simplistic arcade games such as this just don't cut it.
69 PERCENT

94

BABY JO

Publisher: Loriciel
Price: £24.99
Authors: Imagex and Martinez
On sale: Out now



Bright colours, cute graphics, lots of nappy jokes – that's our *Baby Jo*.

The French, eh? Sometime they ask us why we're always saying their games are weird, and – to be honest – we've often got very little answer for them. Sure, *Alpha Waves* and similar show some decidedly spooky ideas about game design, but for the most part their stuff can be decidedly normal – and in many instances increasingly good. Nobody could have much to complain about as far as the likes of *Cruise For A Corpse*, say, are concerned, and if the names of some games (*Jupiter's Masterdrive*?) or subject matter (the extreme violence of *Ranx*, the sex in various games) still raise eyebrows, it's increasingly becoming a reflex reaction.

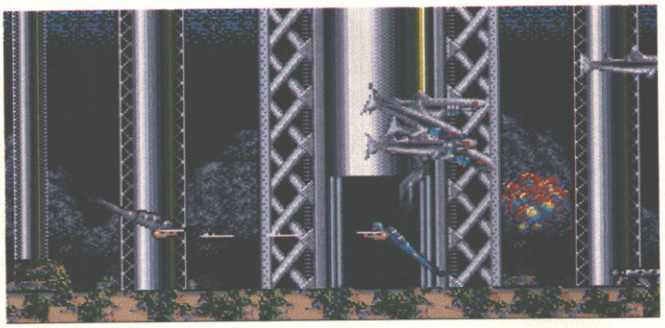
And then we get to something like *Baby Jo*. On the surface a cute platform game starring a little baby – pleasantly free of the shades and leather jackets of a *Brat* or *Magic Pockets* and really rather endearing – it's underpinned by the most, well, French gameplay touches seen in quite a while. Take the fact that as you eat bonus food, Baby Jo's nappy in the top corner of the screen gets darker and darker (thankfully blue, not the more expected colour) until you suffer death by unchanged nappy. Luckily, collectable replacements are scattered around the landscape – including special super-powered ones! – so you shouldn't come a messy cropper too often.

Or take the ultra-loud slurping and burping after Baby Jo quaffs a bottle of milk – such delight in human bodily functions! – or the comic way in which he shoots up screaming into the sky if he happens to step in an inconvenient fire, a truly Warner Bros cartoon sort of effect. It's the sort of sensibility that prompted programmers to include the notorious bottom-prodding option in *North And South*, and it helps make the game a lot of silly fun.

Unfortunately though, despite some pleasing animation on Baby Jo himself and the various animal baddies out to make his journey home a misery, there's little else to say about the game. It's a very standard horizontally scrolling platform avoid-'em-up sort of thing, very similar to half of Code Masters or Hi-Tec's output but not as well programmed. The scrolling is certainly very jerky, and it's hard to see how the game could really command this sort of price point at all. Still, it's hard to dislike it. (And it's very, very French).

● *MATT BIELBY*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Endearing, full of odd comic touches, and distinctively French – but not really much of a game. For shame.
49 PERCENT



A scene seen in a hundred Bond films – it's the underwater spear-gun shoot-'em-up.

THUNDER JAWS

Game: Thunderjaws
Publisher: Domark
Authors: The Kremlin
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

Reviewing For Beginners, Lesson One. "*Thunderjaws* exhibits everything that's bad in the field of coin-op conversions." Discuss.

Reviewing For Beginners, Lesson Two. In your own words, describe fully (giving examples where necessary) why flimsy, characterless graphics, blippy sound effects, slow, shallow and tedious gameplay which adds nothing to the creaky old *Rolling Thunder* genre (which wasn't exactly groundbreaking when it first appeared about four years ago anyway), and a finished product with serious bugs still in it (such as losing a life, then re-appearing in the middle of a floor and immediately losing all your other lives without being able to do anything about it) are unacceptable characteristics of a full-price Amiga game in 1991.

Reviewing For Beginners, Lesson Three. In two hundred words or less, formulate a convincing explanation to support the statement "I'd rather have my liver pierced with a rusty fork and undergo a particularly unpleasant series of rabies inoculations than have to play this quite disgracefully boring and incompetent production-line conversion job ever again."

Reviewing For Beginners, Lesson Four. Arrange the following words into a well-known phrase or sentence: crap load *Thunderjaws* of old is a.

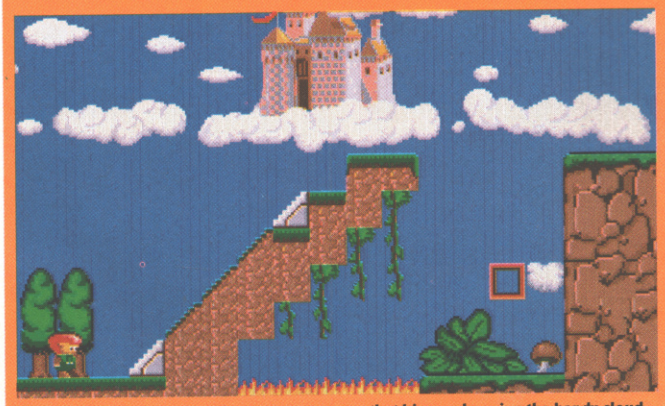
● *STUART CAMPBELL*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Okay, it was only an average coin-op, but this is a dreadful conversion and if Domark seriously expect anyone to pay £26 for it then they're in for a severe disappointment. Completely awful in almost every way.
17 PERCENT

BUILDERLAND

Publisher: Loriciel
Price: £24.99
Authors: Sofiane Bendiabdallah and others
Release: November 1991

Sooner or later it had to happen – someone would dare to come up with a *Lemmings* copycat for the Amiga. More so than *Brat* or anything else that's been likened to the Psygnosis classic – now the best selling Amiga game of all time, fact fans! – *Builderland* is an indisputeable clone, but that's not to say it isn't any good! The basic idea – that you play fairy godmother to little characters (or, in this case, *one* little character) walking along a hazardous landscape by modifying things to nullify the traps ahead – is such a strong one that it could hardly fail to work, and it certainly does the business here.



Pretty graphics, simple puzzles – you get across that big gap by using the handy cloud.

Thus the little chap you see trotting along the bottom of these screens is totally stupid and uncontrollable – ignore him. Instead, concentrate on the red cursor square, which you can use to pick up and move around the various objects ahead. Grey blocks can plug holes, yellow blocks can float in the air, stairways act as, well, stairways, bombs explode a bit of ground creating a new route and so on – all used together they'll hopefully create a safe path for your dumb little charge to navigate. Generally the problems are rather more straightforward than you'll find in *Lemmings* – you'll find the bits and pieces you need to fix and particular trap floating around nearby, and it's just a case of juggling around with the various bits provided.

It's unfortunate, then, that while the basic idea works, programming is of a very lack lustre standard – budget game stuff, really. Flat primary colours, limited animation, every free object of exactly the same size – it all smacks of someone doing the job by-the-numbers (in fact, it all smacks of someone doing the job using *AMOS*, a fact revealed shyly in the corner of the title screen). Real 8-bit stuff then, reminicent of *Kid Gloves* in look and feel more than anything else (especially in the hopeless sub game) while not as pretty, and ultimately a disappointment. It'll find its fans no doubt – the game is without doubt quite fun to kick around with for a while – but you couldn't say it was actually *good*.

● *MATT BIELBY*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Fairly interesting *Lemmings* clone, but so cheaply put together as to be almost embarassing. Fun though.
63 PERCENT

NAPOLEON I

Publisher: Internecine
Price: £29.99
Author: Frank Hunter
Release: Out now

Napoleon 1: "reasonably attractive maps"

Napoleon, eh? Not only did he overrun most of Europe with French soldiers, subjecting it to a reign of terror and weirdness for several years, he's also been responsible for some of the most excrutiatingly boring computer games ever.

Nothing changes in *Napoleon I*. You can choose to play one of four campaigns, either against the computer or a wargaming chum, and dole out orders to your troops in the traditional (somewhat laborious) manner, with the emphasis being placed on maintaining supply lines. There's also an option (which I politely declined) to pause the game and physically act out the battles with your collection of lead soldiers, feeding the results back in afterwards.

What you won't find, however, is any attempt to make the game appeal to the novice. While the maps are reasonably attractive(ish), the standard of presentation generally is abysmally low. It's a tough, uncompromising, workmanlike simulation, one that'll grab even the most committed wargamer by the collars and say: "Listen, pal, either you're with me or you're not. Which is it to be?"

And that, naturally, makes it a pain to review. Those manly enough to roll up their sleeves, grit their teeth and enjoy themselves whatever the cost will demand to have me up against the wall for marking it so pitifully low, while everyone else, the overwhelming majority, will want me strung up for rating it so ridiculously high.

I'll keep my head down for a bit.

● *JONATHAN DAVIES*

THE BOTTOM LINE
A dream come true for Napoleonic war fans, and a complete irrelevance for everyone else. I tried hard to get interested in it, I really did.

39 PERCENT

STRIP POKER DELUXE II

Publisher: CDS (The Software Business)
Author: Artworks
Price: £24.99
Availability: Out now

Computerised strip poker eh? Aren'tcha just sick of it? It's not normally the sort →

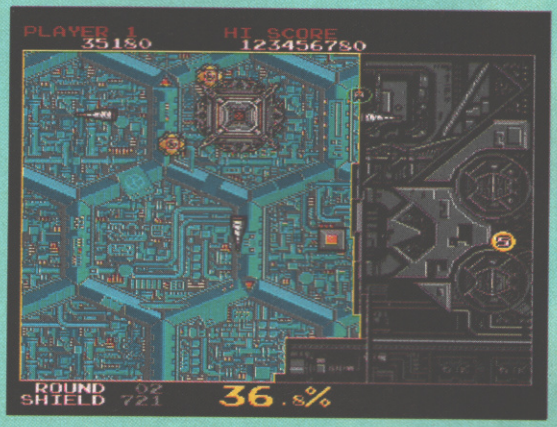
VOLFIED

Publisher: Empire
Price: £24.99
Authors: Oxford Digital Enterprises
Release: Out now

Everyone seems to be updating ancient arcade classics at the moment – Domark's *Super Space Invaders*, Ocean with their updated *Robotron*, *Smash TV* – but few are as simple and as gorgeous looking as *Volfied*, Empire's lush new version of *Qix*.

At this point, of course, I have to explain what *Qix* is (or was) – one of the very early arcade games from the likes of Atari or (more likely) Taito, I think. A series of single screen arcade puzzles, you controlled a little diamond pointer thing that 'lived' on the edges of a flat coloured screen. It was your task in life to zoom out into the middle of the screen as far as you dared, make a couple of nifty right angles, then dash back to the edge again, hopefully sectioning off a large area of the screen (which would then change colour). Once you'd got 75 percent of the area over to your 'side' you'd completed the screen and it was onto the next one.

Sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, it would be if not for the 'sparx', little sparkler things that also lived on the edges of the screen and killed you if they touched you, 'fuses', which looked similar, but zoomed down the lines you were drawing if you proved too slow (and similarly killed you) and the 'Qix' itself, a funny snake affair which lived in the interior of the screen, moved about a lot, and (erm) killed you if it touched any of your uncompleted boxes.



Pretty, isn't it? You are the little thing surrounded by a green halo, the Qix substitute is the spike-firing, um, 'thingie' at the top, and the next screen is revealed as you cut away at this one.

And *Volfied*? Well, *Volfied* is more or less exactly the same game. The difference is in the graphics – rather than the flat colours and simple lines of *Qix*, this has state-of-the-art, directly-ported-over-from-the-coin-op visuals, and they're gorgeous. Instead of flat colours, the backgrounds are complex, intricate circuit boards, instead of a diamond shape you're an armed space ship, instead of sparx you have a vast swarm of little monsters who live in the interior of the screen, and instead of a few connecting lines the Qix is a multi-segmented space dragon thingy (or a giant ladybird, or a massive robo-hand, depending on the level).

Much of the credit for the quality of *Volfied* has to go to Taito, of course – it's their new graphics and their original idea that make the game after all – but Empire have done a more than credible conversion job. It's fast, it looks lovely – and fills the entire screen, rather impressively – and the half strategy/half pure reactions gameplay proves very satisfying in an abstract megalomaniacal sort of a way (taking over areas of a screen is more or less the same thrill as the one you get taking over countries, wargame style). Like all games based on simple arcade originals, it can get a bit samey after a while, but what it does, it does almost perfectly. This is a game that's hard to criticize. ● *MATT BIELBY*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Arcade perfect conversion of Taito's updated *Qix*. Gameplay – despite complications – is simple as it comes, and like all the best simple games it works superbly. Could get repetitive in long term.

80 PERCENT

VOLFIED: ALL THE FUN OF FILLING IN THE BIG SPACES IN A COLOURING BOOK

Boo, hiss! Little baddies whiz about making your life a misery, getting more frantic as their space is cut down.

So does the big, Qix-like baddie, though he actually shrinks as you take over the screen.

Blocks appear and disappear, getting in your way at vital moments!

This is you – checking out another bit of screen which might be safe to take out.

While this line shows all the stuff you've got already. This slowly-building-it-[illegible]-ique is boring but dependable – for really big scores something a bit more risky is required!

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of thing we spend a great deal of time with here at AMIGA POWER – not through any reasons of prudishness, you understand, but simply because it tends to be so terribly, painfully dull. Almost as dull as people who moralise over it, in fact.

It's hard to see what there is to get offended about here, that's for sure – unless you count crap game-making as offensive. As computerised pornography goes this is as lame and tame as it (ahem) comes. In fact, far from being titillated – the erotic factor is about the same as Page Three – I spent most of the game rather guiltily wondering what our descendants would make of it all. If they should dig up our ruins and come across something like *Deluxe Strip Poker II*, what sort of sad impressions would they get of us?

Still, to the game. You know what it's all about, of course. You play a few hands of cards, watch some lass (from a choice of three) whip off her blouse, then sit playing more cards for ages and ages until she's sailed through her underwear. Of course, in the interest of Lord knows what, the occasional picture of 'you' (the male) crops up, as you also lose your kit – though, to be honest, I turned my face away from the screen when these bits came up.

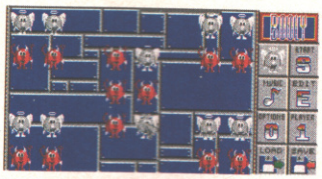
Nothing new then, but does it score highly within the rigid limitations of strip poker games? Well, no, not really. The screen flickers terribly (in much the same fashion as a cheap porno video actually – not that I'd know, of course), and though playing cards against the computer can be fun for a while it's not £25 worth of fun. No, I'm afraid this is an appalling piece of software, part of an appalling genre, and, I presume, aimed at pretty appalling people.

● ***COLIN CAMPBELL***

THE BOTTOM LINE
Even cheap-thrill seekers will find this sad, witless – and expensive. (If you want women, just think how many porn mags you could get for £25!) Dreadful.
7 PERCENT

BOOLY

Publisher: Loriciel
Author: TAG
Price: £19.99
Release: Out now



***Booly*: angels and devils add interest**

Booly is yet another (another!) abstract puzzle game – there seems to be no end to these things. This one, despite the awful meaningless packaging and dull look, is actually rather diverting – not a puzzling classic of *Tetris* or even *Loopz* proportions, but a damn sight better than the *Quadrels* of this world. There is actually a workable – if slightly odd – game in here.

The idea is that you are faced with a group of coloured tiles, all linked together in ways you only discover by clicking on them. Click on one tile, which turns it to another colour, and tiles connected to it will similarly flip colours – your task is to get all the tiles the same colour within a time limit, which takes some frantic experimental clicking, a bit of logic, a good deal of memory testing and a fair amount of luck. Indeed, it's the sort of thing that many people – myself included – will be tempted to play on some sort of blind luck/intuition basis rather than having any truck with cold logic at all, and it's to its credit that it works as a game this way too.

And that's it really. There are variations on the theme of course – some levels feature flipping angels and devils rather than grey-or-coloured-tiles, and are all the prettier for it – and occasionally it gets frustrating to the point of almost impossibility, but really little else to say. If you like abstract puzzlers it's a perfectly acceptable if a little uninspired one, and happily comes in at a mid-range sub £20 price point. You could easily do worse.

● ***MATT BIELBY***

THE BOTTOM LINE
Dull looking, but in actual fact reasonably diverting, second division puzzler. Not good or bad, just okay.
64 PERCENT

COVERT ACTION

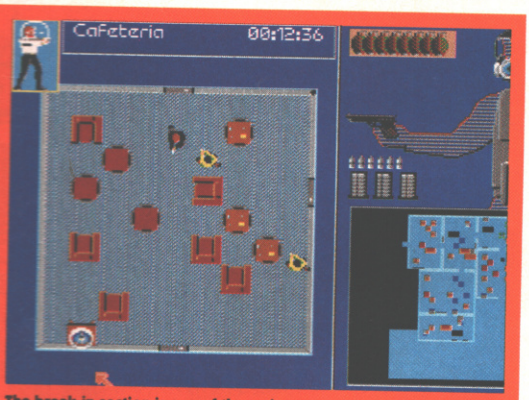
Publisher: MicroProse
Price: £34.99
Authors: Des Fernanado and Allan Holloway
Release: Early 1992

Ooh blimey, it's another MicroProse game. Batten down the hatches, no phone calls please, I've got some serious reading to do. Don't you wish that once, just once, MicroProse could release a game that came with a manual less than a foot thick?

Anyway, several hours later, I've expertly deduced that *Covert Action* is a deep (surprise!) and complex (surprise!) simulation (surprise!) of the world of international espionage. As a top-secret troubleshooting James Bond type employed by the CIA, your mission – should you choose to accept it, naturellement – is to stop any of 20 terrorist groups from perpetrating various terrorist-type crimes across the world. This you do by stealthily breaking into secret hideouts, cracking coded messages, following suspects, tapping phones, and all manner of sneaky spy-type stuff like that, until eventually all the bad guys and gals are banged up in the slammer (ouch) and the world is safe for capitalist imperialist pigs everywhere once again (oops).

Okay, so the real question here is, as ever, "Is *Covert Action* worth the huge amount of effort you'll need to get into it?". And the answer in this case is (surprise!) "Yes". Against all my expectations I really enjoyed this game, and found myself getting right into the feel of the whole thing, even pressing the movement keys softly when attempting a break-in, lest the noise alert the guards.

It's a level of involvement very few games achieve (Colin had a similar experience with MicroProse's *Silent Service II* a couple of issues ago), and it's a long time since I've fallen for it. The code-breaking section and the phone-tapping sections would make respectable puzzle games by themselves, so the fact that you can practise them individually before playing the game proper has to be seen as a real bonus. You can choose, to some extent, how complicated (ie difficult) you want things to be, and the manual is comprehensive and helpful if you do get stuck.

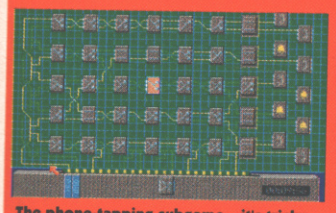


The break-in section is one of the major parts of the game. It plays a little bit like the *Gauntlet* clone *Into The Eagle's Nest*, but with more emphasis on stealth than blasting. Well, except in this bit here...

Unfortunately, not everything's been so well thought out. The keyboard layout is a ridiculous handful (arrow keys to move, spacebar to fire your gun, shift to jump, various function keys for other, crucial, operations, '5' to crouch down – not too ergonomic, is it?), and if you use the joystick for movement you get in even more of a tangle. Inexplicably, though, you can only perform diagonal movements by using the stick, which is a serious handicap to keyboard control. Disk swapping, while not as bad as it might have been, is still a bit intrusive (a real shame in a game this atmospheric), and some of the trudging around office blocks in search of clues can get just a fraction tedious.

But wait – I'm not trying to put you off here. *Covert Action* is – perhaps more so than any MicroProse title I've seen, with the exception of the golf game also reviewed this month – a lot of fun, and it'll reward the effort you put into it more than adequately. The only blot on the horizon is the price – at £35 (just about justifyable for a top-notch flight sim, perhaps, but a real cheek for most other products) it's certainly going to cost you enough to make you think twice, but if this sounds like it might be your sort of thing then don't hesitate. This is, without a shadow of a doubt, a good one.

● ***STUART CAMPBELL***



The phone-tapping subgame – it's tricky

The boss – note the suspicious birthmark

THE BOTTOM LINE
Surprisingly entertaining, varied and pacy spy sim, spoiled to an extent by some slight programming and design sloppiness. Master the controls and get used to the disk accessing, though, and you'll find yourself having a groovy time. It's not cheap, though.
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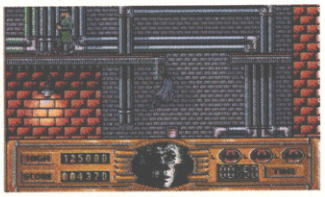
BUDGET

Budget time is here again – three pages of cheapie games for around the eight or ten quid mark. From the heights of *Sky High Stuntman* to the depths of *Dragon Ninja*, all human life is here – and that's just on page one..!

BATMAN THE MOVIE

Publisher: The Hit Squad
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now



The Caped Crusader swings into action in the warehouse scene, *Bionic Commando*-style. It's effective action stuff, though we've seen it all a number of times since.

Often mentioned whenever anyone's desperate to come up with an example of a film licensed game that's actually any good, *Batman The Movie* is one of those accepted Amiga game milestones. It's also something none of us have actually loaded up for ages, so taking another look at this, now on re-release on budget, it was surprising to see just how, well, eighties it looks. Batman's grey for some reason (rather than the film's more menacing black) and walks a bit, well, funny, but you can't deny the addictive qualities of the main game – two large platform, ladders and shooting runarounds which make effective use of a *Bionic Commando*-esque Batrope allowing you to swing to all those hard-to-get-at little places. There's rather too much of the "Hang on, there wasn't a baddie behind me a minute ago, how did *you* get up here?" syndrome, but it's good stuff nonetheless.

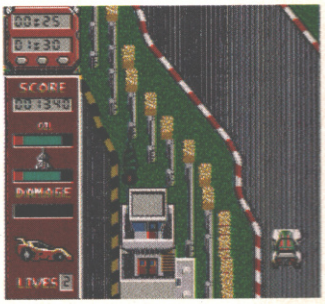
Splitting up these two central sections are a so-so puzzle and two very simple – but fast and effective – into-the-screen race sections, one featuring the Batmobile, the other the flying Batwing. Good value then at £7.99, if not quite the wonder game we all took it for at the peak of the movie hype, though I wonder how many people, post Batman Pack, compilations and everything, don't own it already. Still, there are a few weeks of solid entertainment in here.

● *MATT BIELBY*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Effective if ever-so-slightly-dated looking movie thing, using the traditional Ocean sub-game formula to better effect than usual. Good stuff.
79 PERCENT

MEAN MACHINE

Publisher: Code Masters
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now



Vertically scrolling drive-and-shoot action in *Mean Machine*, another typical Code Masters potboiler.

Connoisseurs of The Codies budgie efforts will no doubt be completely familiar with *Pro Powerboat Sim*, an overhead view water-based racing game which enjoyed considerable success last year. *Mean Machine* is almost the exact same game except we're dealing with land based automobiles instead of speedboats.

It's an old fashioned and not displeasing top-view Formula II racer with all the usual obstacles, mad opponents and ramps to negotiate, plus a useful rocket launcher at the front of the car, and a nasty oil slick dispenser at the back.

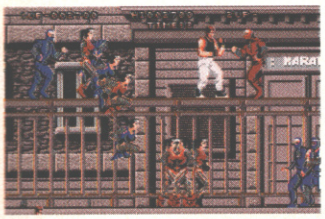
Mean Machine is neither as sexy, nor as challenging as *Powerboat*, though, and one has to presume that this is aimed at a distinctly younger audience. It's certainly an addictive little number, if somewhat limiting, and it positively shines with that youthful brightness which has become Code Masters calling card. For all its good points though, *Mean Machines* is an inescapably tiny game. There are only four courses to complete, which even the most hamfisted games player will manage within a matter of three hours. If this game had been stretched, or peppered with variety, it might have been a budget classic. As it is, *Mean Machines* is a short-lived thrill.

● *COLIN CAMPBELL*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Lots of fun at first, but far too limited to be of lasting value. Might appeal to those under ten years of age, though.
67 PERCENT

DRAGON NINJA

Publisher: The Hit Squad
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now



Just when it looked like all the worst beat-'em-ups had been re-released on the Amiga, along comes *Dragon Ninja*.

"Enjoyable and challenging" says the box of this game, and it's half right. *Dragon Ninja* is a game in the *Kung Fu Master* tradition of simplistic scrolling pseudo-beat-'em-up action, and this conversion looks remarkably close to the coin-op it's, er, a conversion of. By some quite inexplicable lapse of concentration, though, the programmers have somehow FORGOTTEN TO INCLUDE THE JUMP FUNCTION! While this isn't too crucial in the first stage, it makes the second one (where you have to leap across the sections of an articulated truck) pretty impossible. You've got no option other than to fall down the gaps, lose a life, then jump up onto the next wagon and do it all again. If you're really good, you'll have one life left for the third section, but the same kind of problem crops up there too and that's you knackered. If it worked, *Dragon Ninja* would be a tolerable enough potboiler, but it doesn't and that's that.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

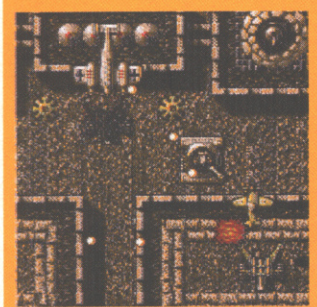
THE BOTTOM LINE
Respectable conversion of duff game ruined by a quite unbelievable programmer cock-up. Did anyone ever play-test this? And why didn't any reviewers notice? What's the world coming to? Literally unplayable past level one.
4 PERCENT

SKY HIGH STUNTMAN

Publisher: Code Masters
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

I'm at an immediate disadvantage here, because this game arrived without any instructions, so I can't for the life of me figure out what it's got to do with stuntmen. What it is is a vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up in the *SWIV* vein, conspicuous by its complete lack of stunt-orientated features. All the same, it's a pretty excellent little game, so I guess we'll forgive it this odd plot lapse. Having told you that *Sky High Stuntman* is a game in the SWIV mould, there's not really a lot more to be said. It's got lovely, solid, detailed graphics, great swarms of enemies, and a *SWIV*-like power-up system that only takes away some of your collected firepower when you die. It plays beautifully, looks great, and it's slickly presented into the bargain. As budget vertical scrollers go this stomps all over *Xenon 2*, and it's one of the best original cheapies I've seen in quite a long time. The close resemblance to *SWIV* is either a boon or a drawback depending on your personal feelings, but as the Codies themselves once said, if you can get this kind of quality software for eight quid, why pay more?

● *STUART CAMPBELL*



Not much barnstorming, sad to say, but there's plenty of slick blasting action in *Sky High Stuntman, SWIV*-style.

THE BOTTOM LINE
It's very *SWIV*, but that's hardly a criticism. As good a vertical blaster as I've seen this year at any price, *Sky High Stuntman* is an essential buy for zap fans.
84 PERCENT

SCOOBY-DOO AND SCRAPPY-DOO

Publisher: Hi-Tec
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

Level Five sees Scrappy stuck in a huge and creepy forest, but at least he's only got another four massive rounds to conquer after this one. Gulp.

Hi-Tec's range of Hanna-Barbera licenses haven't been anything to get worked up about before now. The average-to-OK *Yogi's Great Escape* was about as good as they got, with *Top Cat, Ruff And Reddy, Defenders Of The Earth* and *Wacky Races* all being a bit on the crap side. I wasn't, then, particularly looking forward to this 'amazing and breathtaking arcade adventure' featuring the annoying little character who ruined the once-classic Scooby Doo cartoon, so imagine my surprise (but luckily I saw the funny side) when it turned out to be Mr. Wilson the caretaker after – er, sorry, when it turned out to be an absolute honey of a game. It's strongly similar in feel and basic structure to Titus' wonderful *Blues Brothers* – although it lacks the incredible polish of that game – with a distinct flavour of Core's *Chuck Rock* and several console games too (particularly the Game Boy's *Super Mario Land*).

Every level has a bonus room hidden away, where Scrappy can collect loads of bonus points and Scooby snacks without hassle from the bad guys.

Play takes place over nine enormous levels, each with loads of secret things to discover (look out for the ice world, Red Dwarf fans!), hidden bonus rooms and power-ups and all that sort of thing, and each featuring striking cartoony graphics with extremely impressive multi-layered parallax scrolling. Play is fast, smooth and easy to control, and the Scrappy character (you don't actually get to play Scooby once in the game!) is a lot more lovable than he ought to be. The pugilistic pup can jump on his enemies to kill them (in the best *Mario* tradition), or biff them with a power-upable punch in the style of *Dynamite Dux*, while certain baddies can actually be put to good use to help Scrappy, in much the same way as in *Chuck Rock*. Our hero has three lives, with an extra one granted for collecting 15 Scooby Snacks, and a couple of continues are available after the first stage, giving you a fair chance of getting to the end.

On first play I thought this was a respectable little cheapy runaround with maybe a couple of nice touches, but the more I get into it the more I love it. As you progress, the levels get bigger and smarter, with enough exploration potential to keep you amused for weeks. Addiction-wise it's got more pull than an industrial-strength vacuum cleaner, and while it's a shame Hi-Tec couldn't fork out the extra dosh to use the proper theme tune, the in-game music you do get is appropriate enough, in a cheesy kind of way, or you can always have some sweetly cheap sound effects instead. My only real quibble is that the potential of Scooby himself (a classic game character if ever there was one) is completely ignored, but at the end of the day, who cares? What you get here is (for my money) the best original budget game ever, and that's really all you need to know. Buy it.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

The huge glacier of the fourth level is where the *Chuck Rock* feel is strongest, but there's plenty of originality and imagination on show too.

THE BOTTOM LINE

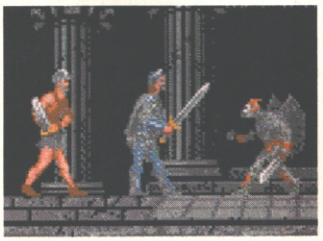
All the best elements of *The Blues Brothers, First Samurai, Chuck Rock, Magic Pockets* (yes, it did have a *couple* of good points) and half-a-dozen console classics thrown together to make a joyful and magnificently entertaining game, at budget price is the biggest steal since the Great Train Robbery.

90 PERCENT

The second level takes place on a desert island, with secret pirate caves galore and treasure all over the place

HEROES OF THE LANCE

Publisher: Kixx
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now


You might not care for the skirt much, but don't you just *love* that moustache?

Whatever you might say or think about Dungeons & Dragons games, there's no denying that when you get one of SSI's conversions on sale at under eight quid you're talking phenomenal value for money. If you've ever thought that D&D stuff sounds quite intriguing, but that there are so many of them you don't really know where to start (and anyway, you don't fancy risking £25.99 on something you might not enjoy much), this is the answer. Close your eyes for a moment, and picture yourself in the land of Krynn...

What's happened is that the Queen of Darkness is in control of the land, having awoken the evil dragons and so on, and only a small band of adventurers known as the 'Companions of the Lance' stand in opposition. Your job is to lead the Companions in a quest to recover the mystical Disks of Mishakal (yes, it's one of *those* sort of games) which can then be used to help restore faith in the old gods, and thereby bring about the Queen's downfall. Or something. It has to be said that if you're the sort of person who reacts badly to 'the ruins of Xak Tsaroth', evil dragons called 'Khisanth' and so on, you're going to have a pretty aggravating time here.

It also has to be said, however, that the game does give you the feeling that you're adventuring into a strange, dangerous land which threatens you at every turn. The graphics are good and the sounds of doing battle with evil are very effective – especially the cries of pain from the servants of evil when you plunge your sword into them! From concealed magic potions or hidden weapons to look out for to much flipping between straight joystick control (for movement and combat) and magical menus selected by simply hitting the space bar, there'll be plenty to occupy you. Unless you're a 100 percent committed D&D hater you'll get lost for hours in this.

● *MATT SQUIRES*

THE BOTTOM LINE

Varied D&D release – not the most sophisticated in the world, but at eight quid well worth a punt – you may like it!

76 PERCENT

WACKY RACES

Publisher: Hi-Tec
Authors: Nick Byron
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

It's wacky, it's a race – it's got the lot!

It seems to me that life was a good deal happier when the likes of Penelope Pitstop, the Ant Hill Mob, Dastardly and Muttley, Peter Perfect, the spooky family, the, um, cavemen, and (oh dear) the other ones I've forgotten graced our tea-time TV screens. For those who're too young or culturally closeted to remember, *Wacky Races* was (and still is) a classic Hanna Babera cartoon, based loosely on Sixties comedy race films like Those Magnificent Men In Their Flying Machines (but with cars). And it was fab.

Great news, then, that Hi–Tec – who've worked their way through *Top Cat, Hong Kong Phooey* and the like – have finally got round to turning *Wacky Races* into a pleasingly simple comedy driving game in which you, as dastardly Dick, have to out-wit and out-drive your bizarre opponents by either a) going faster than them or b) (and better) sabotaging their route.

Unpleasantness involves setting up simple traps in the way of the other cars (which takes place in a little platform sub game) or merely shoving them off the road using an unreliable spike which pops out the front of the Dickmobile. Even taking into account these complications, it's fairly simple two-dimensional stuff, though colourfully presented and with a fairly catchy line in addictive gameplay.

Kids stuff perhaps, and not quite up there with the best of original budgie releases, but its good fun for a while, and – hurrah! – it's got all those great *Wacky Races* characters in it.

● *COLIN CAMPBELL*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Well worth the asking price, especially if you are blessed with younger members of the family (or oldies on a nostalgia kick). Humourous and addictive in a cheap and cheerful kind of way.
70 PERCENT

TITANIC BLINKY

Publisher: Zeppelin
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

If you think he looks sweet now, just wait until he gets his little gun out...

This one appears to have undergone something of a plot overhaul since it was first announced, relinquishing a dubious-taste tale of exorcism for the more usual 'defeat madman trying to take over the world' job. How you go about it exactly is something I'm unable to tell you, unfortunately, as the instruction manual's about as much use as an outboard motor is to a squirrel. Honestly, budget houses aren't renowned for comprehensive documentation, but when you don't even have the most basic idea of what you're supposed to be doing matters are getting beyond a joke. Consequently, even after the best part of a day's play, all I can tell you is that *Titanic Blinky* is a cute arcade platformer with neat sound effects and chunky, pretty graphics. You can jump around a bit, you can shoot things sometimes, and, er... It's, um, probably very good, though.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Come back MicroProse, all is forgiven! This looks like it might be a fun cutie in the *Dizzy* mould, with big, cheerful graphics and lots of tricky puzzles, but I can't really tell. Sorry.
66 PERCENT

MANIC MINER

Publisher: Software Projects
Price: £9.99
Release: Out now

Now we're talking... After the successful transporting of the wonderful *Head Over Heels* to the Amiga by The Hit Squad, Software Projects get in on the act with another release (it came out a couple of years back but sank without trace) of the all-time Spectrum (and just about every other 8-bit machine under the sun) classic, *Manic Miner*. The game which defined the rules for platformers for years, *Manic Miner* combined excellent (for the time) graphics with surreal humour and fiendish design to produce, frankly, one of the best games ever played. This version includes a pixel-perfect copy of the Speccy original, as well as an updated 90s version with big graphics, scrolling screens and new movement patterns, so that even in the unlikely event that you remember how to do all the old screens, you've still got a whole new challenge to tackle. The one downer is the music, which somehow manages to be worse than it used to be back in 1983, but otherwise this is exactly the same superb game that it always was. The inclusion of the old and new versions should suit just about everyone, from nostalgia buffs to those who insist that Amiga games should have Amiga graphics (sad, sad people), and there's really no more to be said – apart from the fact that they're about to release a similar updating of *Jet Set Willy*. Don't miss it.

Yes, this really is an Amiga screenshot!

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

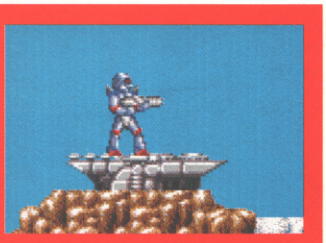
THE BOTTOM LINE
Two perceptibly different games for a tenner, both of them fab. Shame about the music, but don't let that put you off this major bargain.
84 PERCENT

TURRICAN

Publisher: Kixx
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

Currently holding down the No. 88 spot in the AMIGA POWER All-Time Top 100, *Turrican* is an enduringly popular multi-directional scrolling arcade shoot-'em-up with enormous, sprawling levels and a neat line in power-up weaponry. Personally I find it completely dull, the levels being far too nondescript to inspire any real sense of progress or achievement, and the repetitive nature of the blasting action being a real drag if your joystick doesn't autofire (in fact, if it doesn't, I'd say the game immediately becomes only half as much fun), but it's undeniably something of a classic, and an irrefutable bargain at the price. Even if, like me, you get bored long before you're even halfway through it, you'll still have had plenty entertainment for your eight quid, so you can't really complain. Grudging though it is, I have to admit to a certain amount of respect for *Turrican*, and although it's not a game I'd ever choose to have in my personal collection, you could do an awful lot worse.

Probably the grooviest weapon ever seen in an Amiga shoot-'em-up. Just stand still, hold down the fire button for a while, and a huge jet of flame blasts out from Turrican's gun, roasting everything in it's path – baddies, walls, you name it, it gets toasted. And as if that wasn't enough, you can rotate it through 360 degrees too!



Our hero stands dramatically on a windswept hilltop and contemplates his next heroic move

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Massive blast frenzy that lacks character badly, but still manages to provide that all-important adrenalin surge, for a while at least. Worth having just for the rotating flamethrower.
73 PERCENT

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A truncated version of the your guide to the best in practically-free games software from the Public Domain this month, but there's a pretty good reason for it as we'll see. Our man in a slight strop is, as ever, Stuart Campbell...

PD

RATINGS: ★★★★★ Excellent ★★★★★ Nearly there ★★★★ Very good ★★★ Has its moments ★★ Flawed ★ Dire

You'll no doubt have noticed that this issue is – at 140 pages – a good deal thicker than usual. The reason is obvious – there's just so much full price software around for review at the moment that we need the extra space to have any hope of covering it all, and it's for the same reason that If I'd Known Then... has taken a rest for an issue or two, Compo Winners are still looking for a home, and the PD column has been cut down by a page. Don't worry though, it's not serious – we'll be back to full strength soon. (That having been said, most PD libraries have been pretty crap at sending us games this month – it's been left almost single-handedly down to George Thompson Services to help us out. Thanks George, and guys – what's happening?)

BLAST
(George Thompson Services)

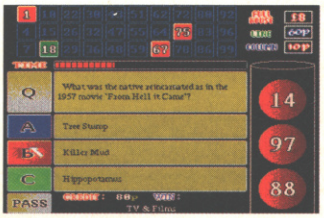
Blast* – it might not be all that great, but in many ways it's at least as good as *Xenon

The venerable arcade classic *Earthforce* is a popular base for many PD vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-ups, but this one takes some inspiration from Andrew Braybrook's awesome *Uridium* too, with huge structures and walls for your ship to avoid as well as all the usual aliens and suchlike. In fact, it's very similar to Prism's £2.99 Pocket Power effort *Plutos*, except with bigger graphics and less colour. To be honest it's not up to the same standard (I love *Plutos*), but it's not a bad little zapper to while away a couple of hours with. This isn't one of those unmissable PD classics (we've been a little spoiled by the likes of *Asteroids* and *Air Ace 2*, I think), but it's a perfectly acceptable, if rather hackneyed, blaster.

VERDICT: Absolutely unremarkable but reasonably tough and addictive shoot-'em-up, but you'd be as well forking out that tiny bit more cash and getting *Plutos*. *

QUINGO
(Deja Vu, disk LPD 21)

This is a weird concept – a pub trivia machine crossed with a bingo game. You choose a one, two or three number question, the correct answer to which awards you the appropriate amount of numbered bingo balls. You start the game with a bingo card at the top of the screen, and any of the ball numbers which appear on the card are crossed off, with 'cash' prizes awarded for completing columns, lines, and whole cards. It's a novel slant to the basic quiz idea, and while it suffers from all the usual handicaps (limited number of questions, no real money to win or lose), it's a fun little diversion all the same. I certainly enjoyed playing it a lot more than I thought I would, anyway.

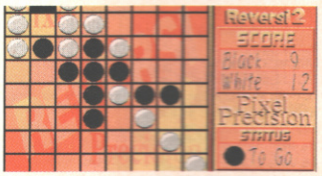


Don't worry if you don't know the answer – none of these numbers are on your card anyway, so it doesn't matter

Rather less tacky-looking than your average *AMOS* game, this isn't bad at all.

VERDICT: An uninspiring idea turns out to be actually quite entertaining - certainly a match for the very similar commercial games from Code Masters and Zeppelin, anyway. *

REVERSI 2
(Deja Vu, disk LPD 16)

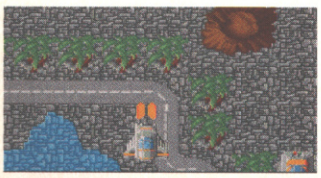


Nine turns in, and it's already looking grim for the computer-controlled black player – this *Reversi* won't tax you too severely

Another game from the *AMOS* library, this is, as the name suggests, a conversion of the classic board game *Othello*. It differs from the original only in as far as it's got a pretty backdrop for a board (well, prettier than the usual one, anyway) and that you can choose different graphics for the playing pieces, allowing for such fascinating battles as cars v. buses, happy faces v. sad faces, rainclouds v. sunshine and more besides. (I was a bit perturbed at having to play the 'sad' faces, though...) You can play against the computer or a friend, but the computer only has one skill level and it's a bit crap (I beat it 58-6 on my first go), so unless you've got a chum handy most of the time, the lasting appeal of the game is a matter of some doubt.

VERDICT: Slick and very aesthetically pleasing, but the weakness of the computer opponent means you'd probably be better off going for one of the other versions on the market. *

BIONIX 2
(Crazy Joe's, disk no 1883)



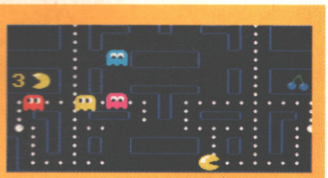
Pretty, smooth, but *Bionix 2* falls down badly as far as gameplay's concerned

Another vertical blasterama, but this is an altogether more professional effort. Big, lush, smooth graphics scroll effortlessly around while squadrons of aliens charge suicidally at your spaceship and you, er, shoot them. Sadly, while being a lot slicker than *Blast* it's not as playable, being far too fast for it's own good. If you move around at all you risk being destroyed by baddies who zip on to the screen at lightning speed without any warning, and the best tactic for progress is to sit at the bottom centre with the autofire on and just watch. Using this method you can actually complete the whole game without touching the joystick, because for some reason you appear to be endowed with infinite lives (well, I lost at least 30 with no end in sight), which makes the game very pretty but totally pointless.

VERDICT: With the aliens slowed down a bit and a sensible life count this could have been really brilliant, but as it stands it's a waste of time. More of a demo than a game. **

PAC-MAN
(Seventeen Bit, disk no 1379)

This version of the classic arcade dot-munching maze game comes on a disk with *Girl Actions* (a creaky old *Galaxians* game which has been knocking around the Public Domain for years) and a load of extremely good disk utilities, but let's not worry about those for now. *Pac-Man* is what this disk's all about as far as I'm concerned, and it's not a bad clone at all. The graphics are big and chunky, the gameplay is very close to the original, and while the great 'wocka wocka' sound of the coin-op has been lost, at least it's been replaced by a not-unpleasant tune. The game itself is one which stands the test of time admirably, and it's certainly the most addictive thing to be found in the column this month. The inclusion of several very useful little techie progs and the *Galaxians* game is just the icing on the cake.



***Pac-Man* munches away happily, unaware of the imminent 'blue cherry' horror**

VERDICT: The best Amiga *Pac-Man* game we've seen so far, and if that's not reason enough for you to go and get this disk you're mad. ****

This month's contact address: GEORGE THOMPSON SERVICES, Cucumber Hall Farm, Cucumber Lane, Essendon, Herts AL9 6JB ☎ 0707 664654 ; SEVENTEEN BIT SOFTWARE, PO Box 97, Wakefield, WF1 1XX ☎ 0924 366982; CRAZY JOE'S, 145 Effingham St, Rotherham S65 1BL ☎ 0703 785680

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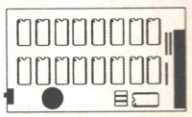

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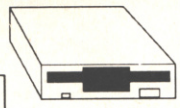

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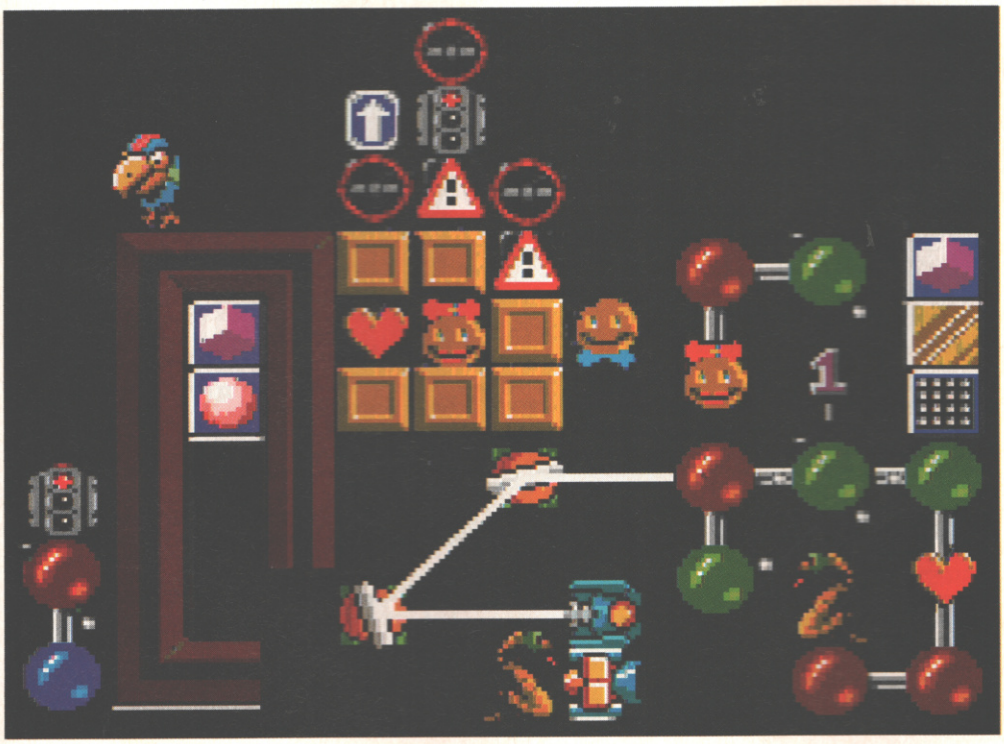
DEFINITION OF sound

PUZZLERS

Welcome to a new series of buyers guides to whole genres of game. Every month we'll take a theme – this month puzzlers – and try and point you in the right money-spending direction. Yes, we'll be (ahem) Defining what's Sound.



Cute graphics, smiley faces, tubes, blocks, lines, brightly coloured blobs and the odd twizzly thing – that's what puzzle games are made of.

Since *The Towers Of Hanoi* (see 'Tower Power' on page 117), people have been fascinated by puzzles. Computer gamers are no exception to this rule, and for as long as there have been computers, programmers have been writing games to allow people to torture their minds, pull out their hair and smash their machines in tormented outbursts of violence in the name of entertainment. Often puzzle elements are incorporated into part of an arcade adventure or other action game, but it's equally common for almost abstract brain-teasing to stand on its own two feet, and that's what we're interested in here...

The most celebrated title of recent years is, of course, ***Tetris***. Soviet mathematician Alexey Pazhitnov's curious and incredibly addictive game of spatial manipulation and lightning reactions is perhaps the ultimate in its field, but it's a well-documented fact that the versions released to date on the Amiga are at best pale shadows of what *Tetris* really should be. Original licensors Mirrorsoft produced pretty respectable 8-bit conversions, but on the 16-bit formats they just couldn't resist the →

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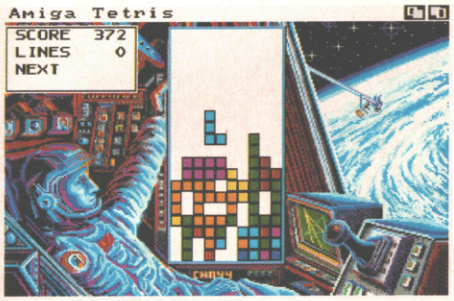
temptation to fiddle around with the classic simplicity of the game. The resulting mess of confusing pseudo-3D blocks and nauseating, pulsating backdrops went quite a way to ensuring that Amiga *Tetris* was almost completely unplayable to all but those with the stoutest of constitutions – everyone else was stricken by migraines within minutes, and epileptics were well advised to steer clear from the word go.

Earlier this year, Infogrames had a second try at the seemingly-easy task of bringing a game which could be successfully implemented on a ZX81 (we actually own a superb *Tetris*-playing watch, which gives you an idea of the level of technical difficulty involved with the game) to the Amiga. Their effort was a pretty direct translation of the Apple Macintosh version, and managed to avoid the visual mayhem of Mirrorsoft's attempt, but terrible control and an appalling keyboard layout (with no alternative method available) contrived to totally wreck the playability just the same. Amiga *Tetris* is the best advertisement for the Nintendo Game Boy there's ever been.

Infogrames redeemed themselves somewhat with their release of one of *Tetris*' many 'official' sequels this year. ***Welltris*** is essentially the same game as *Tetris*, but played in a well (so no surprises there). While it's not as instantly graspable as its predecessor, *Welltris* is still a great game in its own right, and Infogrames' version is pretty faultless. The problem is that there's a Public Domain version called *Welltrix*, which is in every meaningful way indistinguishable from the commercial one, so unless you're really (really) desperate to be distracted by some pretty backdrops, you'd have to be a bit soft in the head to fork out twenty quid for *Welltris*.

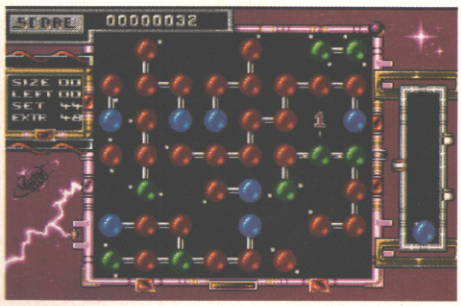


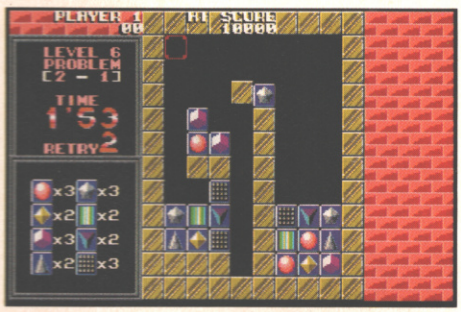
Top: Zeppelin's excellent budget *Stack Up*
Bottom: A completely crap Amiga *Tetris*. Play our issue seven cover version instead.

THE SEARCH FOR THE NEXT TETRIS

Many games have claimed and tried to be 'the next *Tetris*' without much success. In most cases the only tenuous connection is the puzzle concept, but one title which does seem to share the bloodline is budget house Zeppelin's ***Stack Up***. Also featuring some elements of Sega's coin-op ***Columns***, *Stack Up* looks and plays like the Soviet epic, but it's more than different enough to avoid accusations of mere cloning. Zeppelin's programmers could also show Mirrorsoft and Infogrames a thing or two about presentation, with graphics you can change to suit your mood and a lovely oriental background tune giving things a feel of real quality.

If presentation's your thing, though, you couldn't hope to do better than Demonware's ***Gem'X***. A veritable feast of exquisite sound and beautiful graphics greet the player on loading this real brain-teaser of a game. Like all the best puzzlers it's based on a couple of very simple rules, making it very easy to get to grips with, but after a few gentle introductory levels it slowly but surely metamorphoses into one of the most horrifically difficult games around. No other game this year had the AMIGA POWER staff in the office until such unsociable hours as this one did, gripped unhealthily by the hypnotic charm of Japanese hostess Kiki and quite unable to admit defeat on some of the apocalyptically-vicious later screens. In the not-all-that-humble-at-all opinion of Stuart Campbell, for one, this is the best Amiga puzzle game money can buy, but others disagree, citing instead a certain epic of mammalian mass suicide...





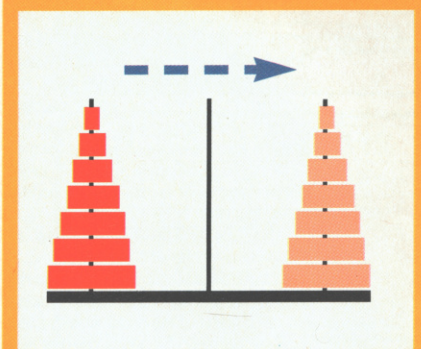
***Atomino* (top) blends physics and puzzling with partial success, while *Puzznic* (below) captures the arcade gameplay, but not the arcade smut.**

Lemmings. 'Unlikely subject material for a computer puzzle game', you might think, and who could blame you? Our manically depressed furry chums have enjoyed considerable popularity of late (Lucasfilm's *Nightshift* and Audiogenic's *Exile* being just a couple of the places they've cropped up), and it's all down to this game. Almost as much a god sim as a puzzler, ***Lemmings*** (almost undoubtedly the biggest-selling Amiga title of all time) was the first major game to introduce the 'indirect control' concept. This brought previously-dormant paternal instincts into play in Amiga software for the first time, as the player struggled to stop his charges from throwing themselves off cliffs and into traps, or any of the dozen other deadly dangers they could fall victim to. *Lemmings* played on the player's emotions like no previous game had ever done (just try holding back a tear when you're forced to blow up a loyal blocker at the end of a stage), and in doing so made for a level of addiction matched by very few titles in the history of the software industry. The choice of many as the best Amiga game ever full stop, *Lemmings* just goes to show what you can do with an original idea. A true classic.

INTERESTING BUT FLAWED IDEAS

Talking of original ideas, you don't see many games about covalent bonding knocking around these days. Off the top of my head I can only think of four, and by far the most interesting is ***Atomino***. Psygnosis' other entry into the puzzling market charges you with the task of constructing large molecules from randomly-appearing →

TOWER POWER - THE FIRST (AND LAST?) EVER PUZZLE

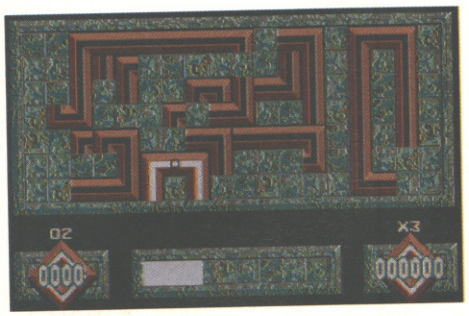


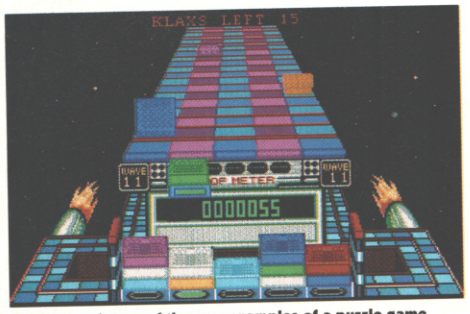
The *theory* is simple: you've got to move the stack of red disks on the left over to the positions marked by the stack of pinky ones on the right, moving them one at a time and using the stack in the middle as a holding post. And in practice...

'The Towers Of Hanoi' is a mythical construction of towers and discs operated over countless generations by a secret order of monks, the final solving of which will, legend has it, herald the end of the world. The construction consists of three long poles, onto the first of which is stacked a series of huge golden discs of increasing sizes with holes in the middle. The puzzle is to transfer all the discs from the first pole to the third, but there are two rules which make it a more difficult proposition than it first sounds. Firstly, only one disc at a time may be moved from one pole to another, and secondly, a disc may not be placed on top of a smaller disc. Traditional home and computer versions feature seven discs (a set-up which can be completed in an optimum 127 moves), but the 'real' thing comprises 64 discs, which takes a few more. In fact, the number of moves required to move a 64-disk stack is (take a deep breath, folks) approximately 9,223,370,000,000,000,000 (if you don't make any mistakes, that is). Which, whichever way you look at it, is going to take a heck of a long time to finish (even at a wildly optimistic 1000 moves a day, it'd be 25,269,506,000,000 years – for perspective, scientists believe life on Earth has only existed for about 3,500,000,000 years), so it looks like the world's safe for a few millennia yet. Almost enough time for a game of *Logical*, in fact.

DEFINITION OF sound

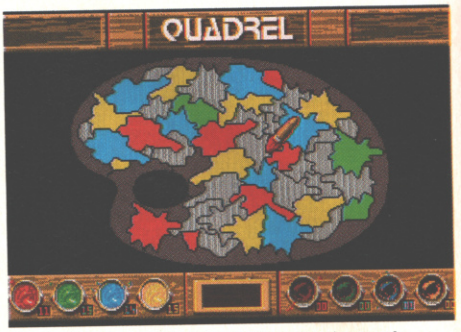
atoms, which at least fits in with the 'classic puzzle games have simple rules' theory. Unfortunately it's not so good at adhering to the 'puzzle games are really entertaining and addictive' rule quite so closely, becoming fairly dull in a fairly short period of time. Most puzzlers are repetitive (indeed, it's often central to their appeal), but for some reason *Atomino* really suffers for it. After you've done a few levels there's very little compulsion to play on, as the subsequent stages are all the same. Reward for your effort is almost non-existent – in something like ***Puzznic*** you're presented with a formidable wall of blocks, but as you play you can see it gradually being wiped out and you feel like you're getting somewhere, in *Gem'X* you get the tangible reward of seeing your side of the screen steadily become more and more like the target side. If you're any good at *Atomino*, what happens is you build up a string of atoms and then it disappears, leaving you with the illogical but unshakeable feeling that you've actually been wasting your time building it up in the first place.





Top: *Loopz* is one of the rare examples of a puzzle game being transferred from the computer to the arcades. Bottom: *Klax* on the other hand was simultaneously released on the Amiga and in the arcades. *Klax* is essential to any puzzle player's collection.

Puzzle games are generally, by their nature, single-player affairs, but one in particular shines as a two-player game. The flaw in Activision's wonderful ***Shanghai*** is that it's all but unobtainable – and has been for some time now. A neat basic design, it out-features most games in the genre, but the most fun is to be had in the two-player against-the-clock mode. For such a sedate Oriental game, the frenzy inspired by the two-player game has to be experienced to be believed. Only head-to-head *Tetris* on the Game Boy comes close, but on the Amiga *Shanghai* is unrivalled.



***Quadrel* - just one of the vast number of Amiga puzzle games which really Aren't Very Good At All**

ARCADES AND THE PUZZLE GAME

Not surprisingly – seeing as the best of them feature such immediately graspable central concepts – many puzzle games have started life (or indeed, ended up) in the arcades.

Tetris appeared as a coin-op eventually, of course, while other notables in the Amiga puzzle game field, including the immensely popular but crap ***Pipe Mania*** – a game which suffers from a similar 'lack-of-motivation' problem to *Atomino*, but doesn't have the same slick and fast-moving gameplay to compensate – eventually got there too, this one under the moniker '*Pipe Dream*'.

Much better is Audiogenic's ***Loopz*** which made the arcades (and just about every other possible format from Gameboy right on up) under its original name and similarly boasts never-ending levels, though, like *Tetris*, the balance between the tension of a cluttered screen and the relief of making some loops and clearing yourself some space to breath is reward enough in itself.

The same characteristic shows up in Domark's conversion of the Tengen coin-op ***Klax***, a game which somehow failed to achieve the success it deserved. Currently eking out a living as the star of the 'Winning Team' compilation, *Klax* had all the addiction of *Tetris* but with more depth to it, and it's a must for anyone's puzzle collection.

Ocean's twin Taito block-zapping coin-op conversions *Puzznic* and ***Plotting*** are both stylish and well-executed examples of their art (although *Puzznic* mysteriously misses the 'naked girls' aspect of the arcade original), and although *Plotting* has a question mark over lastability (no level codes), it's got rather more character than *Puzznic* – and more than most other puzzle games too, come to that.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL

Of course not all puzzle games are good. Oh no. In severe danger of getting splinters from the rough wood inside the beer container are such 'gems' as *Tangram*, Thalion's completely pointless computerising of the Oriental game of wood-block manipulation, and *Quadrel*, an even more pointless demonstration of the theory that you can colour in any map using no more than four different colours without any areas of the same colour touching each other (!) which Infogrames saw fit to inflict on the world earlier this year.

Rainbow Arts brought us *Logical*, an incredibly repetitive and yawn-inducing epic of marble-rolling frolics, but we sent it back again, and Miles Computing took not just the biscuit but the entire tin with *Living Jigsaws*, possibly the lamest concept for a computer game in the history of mankind.

There have probably been games worse than this, but you'd have to descend deep into Dante's Inferno to find them and that's not something we're prepared to try right now. ●

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KLAX	DOMARK	£29.99	*****
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LEMMINGS	PSYGNOSIS	£25.99	*****
LIVING JIGSAWS	MILES COMPUTING	£25.99	*
LOGICAL	RAINBOW ARTS	£19.99	**
LOOPZ	AUDIOGENIC	£24.99	****
PIPE MANIA	EMPIRE	DELETED	**
PLOTTING	OCEAN	£24.99	***
THE POWER	DEMONWARE	£25.53	***
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QUADREL	LORICIELS	£24.99	*
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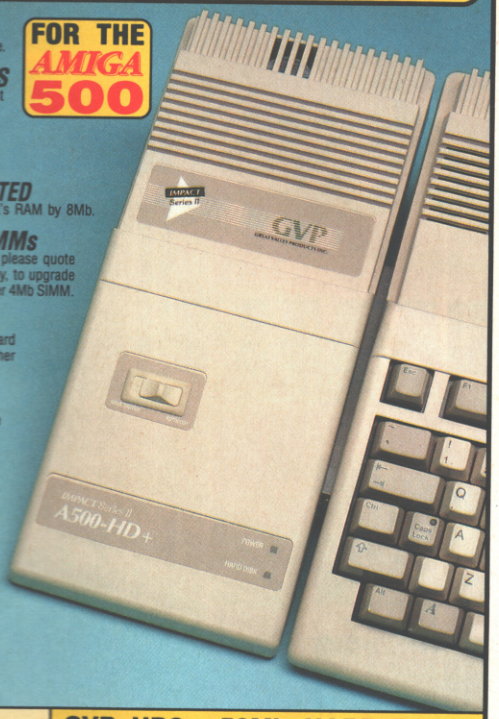

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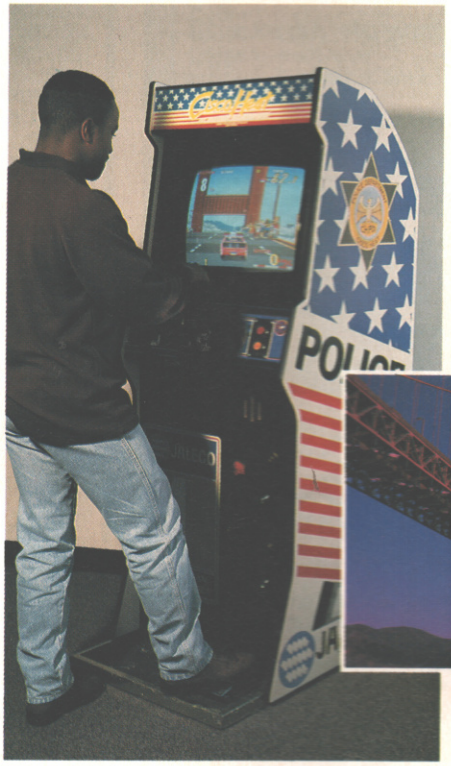
If you've booted up this month's coverdisk demo, you'll have already taken Mirrorsoft's *Cisco Heat* for a spin. It looks to be a piping-hot conversion of the arcade original, but – let's face it – no Amiga game is ever *quite* going to match the experience of the arcade machine.

That's why we've teamed up with Mirrorsoft to celebrate their *Cisco Heat* conversion by giving away one of the original coin-ops. (It's not just any old machine either – it's the very one the Amiga programmers used in putting together their conversion of the game!) This just could be the AMIGA POWER prize of the year!



ALL ABOUT THE GAME

As if you didn't already know, *Cisco Heat* is an outrageously fast driving game set on the streets of San Francisco. The graphics are glorious, the speed is unbeatable, and its playability is pretty blooming excellent too. Best of all, there's a great sense of realism as you drive past famous landmarks in Frisco. The steep hills are all there, so are the tramcars, and you can even see the grim prison island of Alcatraz set in the Pacific behind you.

HOW TO BE A WINNER

We've set three teasers based loosely on the theme of San Francisco. It's the city of the Golden Gate, TV cop shows, and the odd earthquake – but we're giving the answers away already! Read on...

1. San Francisco means what in Spanish?
2. What's the name of San Francisco's (American) football team?
3. Before finding fame in Romancing The Stone, he portrayed a cop in The Streets Of San Francisco. Who is he?

MAKE SURE YOU DO THIS...

Scribble the answers on a postcard (or the back of an envelope) and post it to us at: Are you going to San Francisco?, AMIGA POWER, 29 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW. If you send us your answers inside a sealed envelope you've got no chance of winning, and don't forget to include your own name and address.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

- **The closing date for this competition is December 31st 1991.**
- **On all matters concerning this competition the editor's decision is final.**
- **Employees of Future Publishing and Mirrorsoft are not eligible to enter.**
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DO THE write THING

This month in Do The Write Thing: do software houses *really* care?; where we can improve The Bottom Line; in praise of *Rodland*; games for people who are crap at games; the dubious virtues of having reviews placed sideways on the page; ELSPA (yawn) and your views on Stuart N. Hardy. And what's more, there's lots of software being given away too!

● **Address your letters to AMIGA POWER, Beaufort Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW**

Dear AMIGA POWER,

I have a question for you. Do software publishers care about their products once they've taken our £25? Some, I imagine, do. Others obviously couldn't care less.

About five months ago I returned my copy of *Kick Off 2* to Anco as it had stopped loading. Enclosed with the disk and receipt was a fairly light-hearted letter using lots of footballing puns. Have I heard from them since? Have I heck! You'd think they'd try and keep on the right side of their customers (after all, it is us nameless, faceless people who keep them in business), especially considering the blatant lying in their adverts – 'featuring referees, linesmen and overhead kicks!'. Really? Obviously all my refs and linesmen learnt their skills at the Lord Lucan School Of Football Officials!

Electronic Arts, on the other hand, clearly realise the value of 'buttering up' the public. I wrote to them enquiring about the data disks for their excellent *Powermonger*. No more than a week later a letter arrived from said company containing all the advice I'd asked for. Very nice blokes.

And another thing – now that we've all been honest with you by returning the questionnaires, I think you should come clean. Do you put a disk on the cover to boost sales, or is it because you believe we should be able to see a product before we buy it? Let's face it, if *Chase HQ* was a coverdisk demo, how many copies would it have sold? And if you do mount disks to boost sales, doesn't that show a lack of confidence in your product? Quite why, I can't imagine – I have to say that after buying the first five issues I'll be getting AMIGA POWER for good from now on.

Keep smiling,
Matthew Queen, Cambridge

Dear AP,

Finding myself in the position of having to go to hospital and then being virtually house bound for six weeks (with cartilage trouble) I decided to buy a new computer to keep me occupied (after my Spectrum decided to take a trip to the computer graveyard a few weeks ago). Having decided on the Amiga I bought (or had bought for me) every Amiga mag on the market . Now, having been in hospital and read them all, I would like to congratulate you, as in my opinion AMIGA POWER came out tops.

The thing I liked best is the way you mark bad games honestly (I'd like to see others give a game nine percent!) and your reviews of PD games, as at the moment they're all I can afford.

What a great idea the Bottom Line on all games reviewed in the last 12 months was, but this could have been made easier for newcomers like myself in two ways: 1) Making a note of the original review date and 2) taking time to find out and note all those games that have been re-released at budget prices. I noticed two or three (including *Tournament Golf*, which must now rate an extra star as value for money) but there must have been more. One slight criticism is that unlike many of the other mags you don't seem to have an advertiser index printed in the back of the mag. *(We do when there's room! Ed).*

Finally, a question – I have a large Spectrum games library and have heard that there is a Spectrum emulator program available. Does this allow you to load all your old Spectrum games, and if so where could I get one?

Yours,
Mr Michael Brown, Walsall Wood

There is indeed a Speccy emulator available, Michael (Stuart reviewed it in the PD column in issue five) and if you have a sound sampler you can load your old Spectrum games into your Amiga via the input sockets and save them out onto disk. Unfortunately though, the emulator runs incredibly slowly (about 40 percent as fast at best, and that's with the colour and sound switched off), and it's of next to no practical use as anything other than a curio. Sorry.

Dear AMIGA POWER,

I've been reading your Second Opinion feature with interest, so here's one of my own:

Hydra (Domark). This is good. The moving water effect is great, the music and graphics are good, and it oozes with playability. Your giving it 37 percent was grating (unlike the game). 90 percent.

Impossamole (GBH). I liked this too, but – wah! – it was nothing like *Monty On The Run*! It's still good though, but the Amazon section is probably too tough for most. 81 percent.

Atomix (Thalion). BORIIINNGGG!!!!! Is there any lasting interest in this? In a word – no! 22 percent

Kick Off 2 (Anco). What a pile of rubbish! Unplayable, awful graphics, and if this is what '90s games are to be like, I'm about to cry. 1 percent

Speedball 2 (Image Works). OK, so the graphics aren't bad, but it's extremely boring! 26 percent.

Red Heat (Hit Squad). This must be the most under-rated game ever. Classic beat-'em-up action with amazing graphics! 87 percent.

Xenon 2 (Mirror Image). Why oh why do I always end up with rubbish? Annoying sound, repetitive graphics and in a word, unplayable. 19 percent.

Gods (Renegade). I have just two words to describe this (*Surprise me -Ed*). Boring, naff. 10 percent. (And *Magic Pockets* isn't much better. 18 percent).

I expect I'm very unpopular with you lot now!

Gareth Buckell, Horley

No, but I dare say you're pretty unpopular with the Bitmap Brothers.

Dear AMIGA POWER,

I just thought I'd write in and ramble on about the old games on coverdisks debate. I'll make it short as I'm sure everyone is bored of the subject by now.

ELSPA claim that covertapes on Spectrum magazines almost killed the industry.

Code Masters claim that the Speccy version of *Treasure Island Dizzy* has sold well over 100,000 copies.

Doesn't sound much like a dead industry to me.

Obviously only good games will sell when people can have games for free from magazines. ELSPA don't want us to have too many good games – they want us to buy crap games so that crap software companies can continue making money from crap games.

Well, that makes perfect sense to

£100 SOFTWARE winner

Dear AMIGA POWER,

Hello, nice mag and all that – especially the free gifts. Who else would have thought of postcards with screenshots on? Not sure how my granny would view having a postcard sent to her from somewhere called 'Rodland' – good grief, she'd be flicking through her atlas from now till doomsday. That's to say nothing of 'Rainbow Islands', and if she got one from 'Monkey Island', she'd probably assume I'd been to Gibraltar on the sly.

However, end of waffle, now on with the criticism of this note. Some may think it trivial, or maybe a joke, but I'm deadly serious: why oh why (*Why oh why has everyone suddenly started putting 'why oh why' in their letters? -Ed*) do you have to put reviews sideways on in the magazine? Note *Rodland* in issue six, or *Nebulus 2* in issue five (and probably several more before). (*No, those are the only two. -Ed*).

Now, when I'm reading the magazine, most of the time I read it conventionally, ie with the magazine horizontally in my lap. But then, when I get to one of the aforementioned sideways reviews, I have to rotate the mag through 90 degrees, making it look to all the world (well, all my relatives) that I have sneaked a copy of Playboy into the magazine, and am scrutinising the centrefold so intently that I am in great danger of going blind! Now, as a Computer Studies student, I am tired of explaining why I play games, and so why I need magazines such as yours, and I don't need the hassle of showing worried relatives the magazine to allay their worries (sometimes I think they would think it more 'normal' if I was actually reading some smut mag instead of these 'comics' – their words, not mine!).

"Wait a minute!!", other readers may shout, "You don't have to read the offending pages at that precise moment, do you?" Well, the way I read magazines is that I read from beginning to end, without missing bits out, otherwise the bits that I do miss out I forget about and so don't read at all, which is really a terrible waste. I can't disappear out of the room with the mag tucked under my arm, only to reappear two-three minutes later, every time I come to one of the offending sideways reviews either – it would only serve to agitate my family's imagination even further!

Yours,
Chris Burns, Peterlee

What a troubled life you lead! Here, have some free games – we'll make sure we include Geisha *for your family's benefit!*

DO THE write THING

me. Buy crap so that crap can continue to come out. Perfect sense.
Thanks for listening,
Alex Finch, Reigate

Dear AMIGA POWER,

I am writing to complain about Matt Bielby's comments on *Rodland* and to give my support to Stuart Campbell. Although the gameplay is simple it's very addictive, and is the type of game which you'll keep on playing even after you've completed it. This cannot be said for such 'classics' as *Monkey Island* and *Eye Of The Beholder*, which were fun while they lasted but have not seen the light of day (or dark of night) since I completed them.

So the question has to be asked – which do you get most value from? A game like *Rodland* which you will keep on playing, or a game like *Monkey Island* which will only take four days to complete (that's how long it took me) and then never be played again?
Yours,
Stuart N. Hardy (only joking, that was just to get your attention)
Andrew Brown, Newcastle

A fair enough point about Monkey Island, *Andrew (Mark said as much in his original review), but don't you think you're being a little hard on* Eye Of The Beholder*? You're certainly not going to finish that in four days. Anyway, it's really a case of horses for courses – if you want to play an adventure (all of which are eventually completable and so suffer from the problem you mention to some degree), it's not really relevant how good a platform game* Rodland *is, and* Monkey Island*'s about as good as adventures get.*

Dear AMIGA POWER,

Alright, let's get the 'Congratulations on an excellent mag' etc out of the way first. I buy a couple of other mags each month, but yours is the only one worth reading cover to cover. Phew, I'm glad that's over with. Now to the meat of the letter.

First, I'd like to comment on 8-bit games appearing on 16-bit – things like *Head Over Heels*. I had a Spectrum a couple of years ago, and felt that most of the software available was of a pretty high standard – I've been hoping for 16-bit versions of these games ever since I bought my Amiga, and I was pleased when *Head Over Heels* arrived, but not many people seem to realise the risk Ocean took with it. Just imagine – if they'd made Amiga *HOH* a right duffer, everyone would moan about how "the Amiga can't match Speccy playability", and Ocean and co would be discouraged from ever releasing games like that again. Thank God Ocean got it spot-on – otherwise the public could be deprived of some excellent software.

Secondly, when I bought my Amiga, it and the ST (boo!) were considered to be almost equal, and indeed there were many more ST owners (fools!) than Amiga owners. *(Hold on, this better not be a 'My Computer Is Better Than Your Computer' letter... -Ed)* I myself was wondering whether or not to buy an ST because of the amount of software bundled with it, but I'm glad I didn't as the Amiga took off at that point, and I believe it has emerged as the victor. I say this because I have noticed fewer ST and more Amiga software on the shelves, fewer ST ports, more games which couldn't or haven't been done on the ST at all, and generally an increase in quality Amiga software. Sales figures released recently would seem to support this, and I would be anxious to hear your views on the subject, as I feel the ST's future will directly affect that of the Amiga. I won't, however, get into an Amiga/MegaDrive debate, as that's a different kettle of rhubarb.

Lastly, have you any idea of how many copies *Lemmings* sold, as it seems to be doing a bit of a Bryan Adams?
Thanks for reading,
Matthew Priestly, Goudhurst

PS How about a regular update of the All-Time Top 100, as there must be quite a lot of changes by now?

To answer your easiest questions first, Matthew, chirpy Nick Wilde at Psygnosis says Lemmings *has sold approximately 250,000 copies on all formats to date. As for the Top 100, it's very likely that we'll be updating it early in 1992, one year after it originally appeared (and probably every 12 months after that), so keep watching.*

The ST thing is interesting, though. Piracy has traditionally been an even greater problem on the ST than the Amiga, for one thing, and the Amiga is, in most respects, quite simply a better machine, which makes for two pretty good reasons for the Amiga's dominance. Don't get smug, though – we agree that a healthy ST market is a Good Thing, and its continued existence will help shore up the computer games market (as opposed to the consoles market) in general.

Dear AP,

Either Darren Smith, Gary Taphouse (issue five letters page), Stuart and Mark ARE very crap at computer games or they haven't spent enough time mastering the controls of the great (and wonderfully entertaining) *Kick Off 2*. And I thought they were supposed to be games reviewers *(I don't remember seeing Darren and Gary's names on our credits panel -Ed)*. Come on lads, everyone knows that Anco's footy game deserves its place in the AMIGA POWER Top 100.
Phew!
Adam Marshall, Stainton

PS *Spindizzy*? Now that IS crap.

Not as crap as Kick Off 2*, though - Stuart and Mark*

Dear AMIGA POWER,

Last night me and my mate started to flick through some past issues of AMIGA POWER and suddenly developed a rare case of laughing fits. I don't know if your 'Oh dear...' section is supposed to be serious criticism but I've never laughed so much in my life! I think it is a vital warning system against totally crap software – keep it up.

Anyway, I was considering buying an expansion for my machine, but what is the difference between the original Commodore expansion and a cheap one from mail order? After all, I don't want to damage my precious Amiga, do I?
Yours faithfully,
Stuart Stow, Goole

Well, Stuart, apart from the fact that some unofficial jobs don't contain the battery-backed clock feature, there aren't, as far as we know, any significant differences to Commodore's own unit. Buy what you like.

STUART N. HARDY BACKLASH CORNER!

Dear AMIGA POWER,

Upon reading Stuart N. Hardy's 'angry' letter in AP6 my first thought was "My, he sounds remarkably pompous and self-important". However, I was unwilling to dismiss someone with 'vast literate experience' so easily, so I looked through my old AMIGA POWERs to find his letters which had been worthy of publication. This is what Stu had to say:

AP3 – Isn't it a shame that magazines don't have full-price games on the cover any more?

AP4 – It appears there's some kind of economic recession at the moment.

AP5 – Apparently the most important aspect of a game is its playability, not just its graphics and sound.

AP6 – Well-packaged games aren't always the best games.

What insight! None of these ideas had ever occurred to me (or anyone else I'm sure)! It just goes to show, first impressions can be wrong. Thanks Stu, I hope to read more of your revealing letters.
Yours,
Greg Brown, Whitstable

And that's all folks! ●

£34 SOFTWARE winner

Dear Sir,

I just started playing games a couple of months ago, and although as a pastime I enjoy it tremendously, I also feel rather frustrated! The trouble is, I suspect that I may be crap! With most games I only manage to get to about level three (*Rainbow Islands, Switchblade, Xenon 2, New Zealand Story, R-Type*). I tend to play mainly arcade platform shoot-'em-up type things. As none of my friends play computer games, I don't know whether this crapatgamesophobia is a common disease and my GP is no help. Could you:
1) Recommend a game which is fun but fairly easy so as to restore my self-confidence?
2) Recommend a suitable graphic RPG/adventure game type thing which is suitable for an absolute beginner (as I've never played one before)?
3) Tell me if I'd be better giving it up and taking up knitting or upholstery instead?

(Last night I dreamt that I managed to finish *Xenon 2*. I thought "This must be a sign", so this morning I got up and played the game with great enthusiasm and optimism, only to find that I'm as crap as ever. Don't let anybody tell you dreams have meaning).
Thanks,
Tui Ivokoto, London.

Don't fret Tui, everyone's got to start somewhere. Why not try Bubble Bobble *and* Monkey Island *(arcade platform shoot-'em-up and adventure respectively)? Classics both, and pretty simple to boot. In fact, why don't we just send you them to get you started? (We're such nice chaps sometimes...) Good luck, and don't give up, y'hear!*

AND ANOTHER THING...

• Brian Docherty of Glasgow thinks the mag started brilliantly but is now rubbish, because we haven't printed any lists of competition winners. Happy now?
• Tony McNicol of Bath doesn't want to see games like *Pharaoh's Curse* on the coverdisk, because "although the game might feature great gameplay, the graphics and sound are undeniably crap". So *Head Over Heels* (for one) is rubbish too, is it Tony? This argument that a game can't be worth having if the graphics are duff is one that we've had from a couple of other people this month, and it's utter nonsense. Games are about gameplay, anything else is secondary. Otherwise, why buy games at all, why not just watch beautiful-but-tedious demos all the time instead? Let's not hear any more of such tosh.
• Philip Kyte of Barnsley wants to know who publishes *The Hitch Hikers' Guide To The Galaxy*. Easy – it's out on Virgin's budget label Mastertronic for £9.99. Call them on 081 960 2255 for details.

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SKYCHASE - Airborne combat for every simulation fan. In this one or two player game, battle against your MIG flying adversary in your F-16 Falcon.
SKYFOX II - Skyfox II, the only ship fast enough to carry on the Skyfox legend. Fight to blow your federation enemies from the Galaxy, at speeds of 9000 kilometres/second!
STRIKE FORCE HARRIER - Puts you in the cockpit of one of Britains most exiting fighter aircraft. Multiple skill levels let you progress to become an ace pilot
TINTIN ON THE MOON - We've been captured by Colonel Jorgen and he's tring to scupper the moon mission. Come on Tintin, you're the only one who can save us, and be the first on the moon
TV SPORTS FOOTBALL - Strap on your helmet for American football simulation that looks like the real thing.
XENON 2 MEGABLAST - This time it's war! The Xenites are back and have thrown time itself into turmoil.

We reserve the right to substitute individual software titles or pack items should the need arise.

CARTOON CLASSICS MEGA 21

NEW HARWOODS EXCLUSIVE!

...AND HARWOODS ALSO GIVE YOU A SUPERB BROCHURE OFFERING UP TO 16 NIGHTS FREE HOTEL ACCOMODATION IN AN EXTENSIVE SELECTION OF 400 HOTELS AROUND THE UK PLUS NOW A SPECIAL BUDGET FRANCE SUPPLEMENT IS INCLUDED!

Priced at an INCREDIBLE

£399.95

Including VAT

DON'T FORGET THAT WHILST YOU CAN OF COURSE PLAY THE GREATEST GAMES, WHEN YOU CHOOSE THE AMIGA YOU ARE ALSO GETTING A VERY POWERFUL PERSONAL COMPUTER. PROJECTS SUCH AS PROGRAMMING, GRAPHIC DESIGN, WORD PROCESSING OR OTHER BUSINESS APPLICATIONS, EDUCATION FOR A WHOLE HOST OF SUBJECTS FROM PRIMARY LEVEL TO 'O'LEVEL ARE ALL A REALITY WITH THE SYSTEM THAT YOU CAN REALLY GROW WITH AS YOUR COMPUTING EXPERIENCE EXPANDS. EUROPEAN COMPUTER OF THE YEAR 1991, EUROPEAN COMPUTER LEISURE AWARDS

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HARWOOD

POWERPLAY PACKS

HARWOOD'S BRILLIANT AMIGA 1Mb 'MEGA 21' GAMES PACK 2

That's right you get the fantastic Amiga & **ALL THE EXTRAS** detailed in Harwoods "Mega 21' Games Pack 1 (left), plus F19 Stealth Fighter AND you also get...

THE SUPERB PHILIPS CM8833/II STEREO COLOUR MONITOR

Twin Stereo Speakers, Green Screen Switch, Free Lead to Amiga, Tailored Dust Cover 12 Months on-site maintenance warranty *(See monitor panel for details)*

A SPECIAL PACK FROM HARWOOD'S FOR YOU SEE THOSE GAMES WITH SUPERB CLARITY AND IN FANTASTIC STEREO...

£629.95 Including VAT

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HARWOOD'S BRILLIANT AMIGA 1Mb 'MEGA 21' GAMES PACK 3

That's right you get the fantastic Amiga & **ALL THE EXTRAS** detailed in Harwoods "Mega 21" Games Pack 1 (far left), plus F19 Stealth Fighter AND then you also get...

THE SUPERB PHILIPS CM8833/II STEREOCOLOUR MONITOR

Twin Stereo Speakers, Green Screen Switch, Lead to Amiga, Tailored Dust Cover and... 12 Months on-site maintenance warranty *(See monitor panel for details)*

Plus... **THE BRILLIANT STAR LC 200 COLOUR PRINTER**

185/40 cps, Full Colour 9 Pin NLQ Dot Matrix Printer with FREE Dust Cover and cable to your Amiga. *(See printer panel for details)*

IF YOU WISH, REPLACE THE LC200 WITH A CITIZEN SWIFT 9 COLOUR AT NO EXTRA COST!!! OR... IF YOU PREFER A 24PIN COLOUR PRINTER, JUST CHOOSE FROM OUR RANGE & ADD THE DIFFERENCE IN PRICE BETWEEN STARS LC200 & 'YOUR CHOICE'. (eg. Citizen 224, add just £50)

A SPECIAL MONITOR AND PRINTER PACKAGE FROM HARWOODS TO SET YOU UP COMPLETELY AND ALL AT A PRICE YOU'LL FIND HARD TO BEAT!

£829.95 Including VAT

POWERPLAY

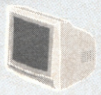
"IT'S THE-BUSINESS"

A TRULY PROFESSIONAL PACKAGE SPECIFICALLY FOR THE BUSINESS MINDED AMIGA USER. THIS ONE SHOULD FULFILL EVERY AREA OF BUSINESS YOU'RE LIKELY TO NEED!

POWERPRO PROFESSIONAL PACK

THE BUSINESS PACK FROM HARWOODS INCLUDES ALL THE FOLLOWING...

AMIGA A500 WITH A FULL 1Mb. MEMORY



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SUPERB PHILIPS CM 8833/II STEREO COLOUR MONITOR
(See Monitor Panel for Specifications)

+

STAR LC200 9 PIN NLQ FULL COLOUR PRINTER
(See Printer Panel for Specifications)

+

A HOST OF BUSINESS SOFTWARE & ACCESSORIES...

PEN PAL V1.3 (Word Processor)...1Mb.
SUPERBASE II PERSONAL (Database)
SUPERPLAN (Spreadsheet)...1Mb.

+

A GREAT TEN GAMES PACKAGE

Datastorm, Drivin' Force, Pipe Mania, Dungeon Quest, Rock-N-Roll, E-Motion Tower of Babel, Skweek, RVF Honda, and Grand Monster Slam.

IF YOU WISH, REPLACE THE LC200 WITH A CITIZEN SWIFT 9 COLOUR AT NO EXTRA COST!!! OR... IF YOU PREFER A 24PIN COLOUR PRINTER, JUST CHOOSE FROM OUR RANGE & ADD THE DIFFERENCE IN PRICE BETWEEN STARS LC200 & 'YOUR CHOICE'. (eg. Citizen 224, add just £50)

Plus...

- ☆ THE SIMPSONS
- ☆ CAPTAIN PLANET
- ☆ LEMMINGS
- ☆ F19 STEALTH FIGHTER
- ☆ DELUXE PAINT III Now with ANIMATION
- ☆ MICROSWITCHED JOYSTICK
- ☆ 10 BLANK 3.5" DISKS
- ☆ DISK LIBRARY CASE
- ☆ MOUSE MAT
- ☆ 3 TAILORED DUST COVERS

ADD A CUMANA CAX 354 SECOND DRIVE FOR JUST £50 TO HELP RUN THOSE BUSINESS PACKS MORE EFFICIENTLY

WE MEAN BUSINESS AT A GREAT PACKAGE PRICE OF JUST...

£899.95 Including VAT

POWERPRO

HARWOODS LEARN & PLAY

PRIMARY & JUNIOR PACK A

Get your children off to the right computing start with this software learn and play pack...

PROF. PLAYS A NEW GAME
PROF. LOOKS AT WORDS
PROF. MAKES SENTENCES
PROF. HUNTS FOR WORDS

Active, enquiring young minds love seeing the cartoon character called Prof. entertain and teach. Children take charge of Prof. on the computer, active learning. Follows National Curriculum(N.C.).

MAVIS BEACON TEACHES TYPING
A "fun" way to learn how to type PROPERLY!

PRIMARY MATHS COURSE
Around 24 modules in this course from 3 yrs old right up to secondary level. Follows N.C.

READING & WRITING COURSE
24 module course. Teaching from the computer and books. For early starters & the dyslexic.

Plus... **10 GREAT GAMES TOO...**
Datastorm, Drivin' Force, Pipe Mania, Dungeon Quest, Rock-N-Roll, E-Motion, Tower of Babel, Skweek, RVF Honda, and Grand Monster Slam.

£99.95 Including VAT

ONLY IF PURCHASED WITH A POWERPLAY OR POWERPRO FROM GORDON HARWOODS.

HARWOODS LEARN & PLAY

GCSE/'O' LEVEL PACK B

GCSE examination level studies on your Amiga computer that's fun!

MICRO ENGLISH, MICRO FRENCH AND MICRO MATHS

A set of three complete self-tuition courses to GCSE level which can also be used for revision work. All programs adhere to the National Curriculum and were designed and tested in schools by professional teachers. Micro French includes "real speech" to help your accent!

PEN PAL- Graphical Word Processor

A fantastic word processor with all the tools you'll need to create effective written work. Ideal for home work, projects etc. or for the families letters. Text wraps automatically around graphics, even as you type! Includes a built-in database and Forms Manager.

MAVIS BEACON TEACHES TYPING

A "fun" way to learn how to type PROPERLY! Learn quickly, easily and with lots of fun! Joystick & Mouse supported with "Guide Hands" on screen to help.

Plus... **10 GREAT GAMES TOO...**
Datastorm, Drivin' Force, Pipe Mania, Dungeon Quest, Rock-N-Roll, E-Motion, Tower of Babel, Skweek, RVF Honda, and Grand Monster Slam.

£99.95 Including VAT

ONLY IF PURCHASED WITH A POWERPLAY OR POWERPRO FROM GORDON HARWOODS.

EDUCATION

If you're thinking about presents why not buy a Harwoods Gift Voucher (all values available).

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Finance Facilities Available*

Please phone us for information and your personal application pack.

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Computers

ALFRETON DERBYSHIRE

The Closer you look, The Better we look.

**Finance terms are available (subject to status) for most products; please see our ordering panel at the end of this advert for full details*

SOUND AND VISION

Words and Pictures

CDTV

IMAGINE, IF YOU CAN, THE CONCEPT OF A NEW, MORE POWERFUL AMIGA...

...WITH 1 MEGABYTE OF MEMORY, AND A COMPACT DISK DRIVE OF ALMOST INFINITE SIZE. A DISK DRIVE SO VAST, IT CAN STORE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DIGITS OF DATA. THIS DATA COULD BE, SPEECH, ANIMATED PICTURES, DIGITISED STEREO SOUND, COMPUTER IMAGES OR WHOLE ENCYCLOPAEDIAS.... AND MORE.

IMAGINE THIS, AND YOU CAN START TO GRASP THE CONCEPT OF CDTV.

THE INTEGRAL COMPACT DISK DRIVE, IS THE KEY TO THE POWER OF CDTV. ITS STORAGE CAPACITY IS EQUIVALENT TO AROUND A QUARTER OF A MILLION FULL PAGES OF TEXT. THIS WHEN INTEGRATED WITH THE 1 MB OF INTERNAL AMIGA CIRCUITRY, CREATES A SYSTEM, WHICH FROM A CD DISK, CAN GIVE YOU ACCESS TO AN UNIMAGINABLE SPECTRUM OF REAL WORLD IMAGES, NEVER SEEN COMBINED BEFORE. THESE VIVID IMAGES, WITH WORDS AND SOUNDS, GIVE YOU A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION IN HOME EDUCATION, ENTERTAINMENT & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY. AND... DON'T FORGET, THAT CDTV CAN PLAY IN SUPERB QUALITY, ANY NORMAL AUDIO MUSIC CD, AND IT CAN ALSO PLAY THE NEW CD+G DISKS, WHICH GIVE DIGITAL SOUND AND ON SCREEN GRAPHICS.

ON CD DISKS NOW AVAILABLE, THERE ARE EDUCATIONAL PACKAGES, ENCYCLOPAEDIAS PACKED WITH REFERENCE INFORMATION, STUNNING GAMES, MUSIC SYSTEMS AND MANY OTHER NEW AND VARIED SUBJECTS, INCLUDING WHOLE WORLD ATLASES OR EVEN THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE, EACH ON ONE CD DISK!!! **CDTV - NOTHING LESS THAN REVOLUTIONARY**

FREE CDTV STARTER PACK!!!

WHEN YOU CHOOSE YOUR CDTV FROM GORDON HARWOOD, NOT ONLY DO YOU GET OUR LEGENDARY SERVICE, BUT WE GIVE YOU A CDTV STARTER PACK, TO GET YOU EXPLORING YOUR NEW WORLD - STRAIGHTAWAY.

THIS INCLUDES A SUPERB SELECTION OF CD DISK TITLES INCLUDING THE WELCOME TUTORIAL & HUTCHINSONS ENCYCLOPAEDIA, PLUS ... FIVE GAMES, SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, SIM CITY, A TOWN WITH NO NAME, CHAOS IN ANDROMEDA, AND THE ACCLAIMED LEMMINGS, WORTH IN TOTAL ALMOST £200.00. IN ADDITION IS THE INFRARED REMOTE CONTROLLER, AND ALL THE HARDWARE NEEDED TO GET YOU CONNECTED.

ALL THIS FOR JUST £599.95

CDTV IS THE SAME SIZE AND STYLE AS MOST VIDEO RECORDERS, SO IT CAN SIT UNOBTRUSIVELY ABOVE OR BELOW YOUR HOME TV AND/OR HI-FI. AND WITH ITS INFRARED REMOTE CONTROLLER, IT CAN BE OPERATED FROM YOUR ARMCHAIR. BUT PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, IF YOU ARE A COMPUTER ENTHUSIAST, REMEMBER THAT INSIDE EVERY CDTV, IS AN AMIGA, JUST WAITING TO BE USED. SO LATER ON, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO BUY THE OPTIONAL KEYBOARD AND DISK DRIVE, TO GET INTO THE WORLD OF AMIGA COMPUTING. PRINTERS, DIGITISERS, GENLOCKS AND OTHER ACCESSORIES,CAN ALL BE CONNECTED TO GIVE ACCESS TO MANY OTHER EXCITING FACILITIES, AND ALSO MANY OF THE EXISTING SOFTWARE PACKAGES AVAILABLE FOR THE AMIGA COMPUTER. NEVER BEFORE HAS THERE BEEN SO MUCH POTENTIAL FROM ONE NEW STUNNING SYSTEM, PACKED WITH

TODAYS TECHNOLOGY.!

CALL IN AND SEE US FOR YOUR PERSONAL DEMONSTRATION, OR PHONE US FOR YOUR FREE DETAILED CDTV INFORMATION PACK.

CDTV ACCESSORIES

DUE TO BE RELEASED SOON - Please call us for latest availability.

CD 1220 KEYBOARD	AN 89 KEY QWERTY KEYBOARD	£49.95
CD 1252 MOUSE	INFRARED MOUSE WITH BATTERY SAVER.	£49.95
CD 1200 TRACKBALL	INFRARED TRACKBALL, WITH THE OPTION OF DIRECT CONNECTION TO EXTEND BATTERY LIFE. DUPLICATES FUNCTIONS OF TWO BUTTON MOUSE AND INCLUDES TWO 9 PIN PORTS FOR STANDARD JOYSTICKS	£79.95
CD 1400 CADDY	FOR HOLDING CD WITHIN DRIVE	£9.95
CD 1401 MEMORY CARD	PERSONAL RAM CARD CONTAINING 64K OF MEMORY FOR STORING DATA OR AS A BOOKMARK FACILITY WITHIN CDTV	£79.95
CD 1405 MEMORY CARD	A LARGER PERSONAL RAM CARD CONTAINING 512K OF MEMORY FOR STORING DATA OR AS A BOOKMARK FACILITY WITHIN CDTV	£249.95
CD 1800 FLOPPY DRIVE	RACK MOUNTABLE FLOPPY DRIVE WITH 880K CAPACITY. CASING ALLOWS ROOM FOR ADDITIONAL HARD DRIVES OR MODEMS ETC.	£99.95
CD 1301 GENLOCK	PAL BASED VIDEO INTERFACE CARD FOR SUPERIMPOSING CDTV IMAGES OVER A VIDEO SIGNAL PROVIDED BY ANY STANDARD VIDEO SOURCE	£149.95
CD 1321 VIDEO CARD	PAL BASED VIDEO INTERFACE CARD TO ALLOW CONNECTION TO TV'S /VIDEOS REQUIRING UHF, S-VIDEO OR COMPOSITE INPUTS.	£TBC

Many Amiga Accessories & Peripherals (e.g. Printers, Disk Drives, Software etc.) are compatible with CDTV. Please phone us for compatability information.

HARWOODS AMIGA

PRO-GEN

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY GENLOCK FOR COMPUTER AND VIDEO MIXING, AT A DOWN TO EARTH PRICE!!!

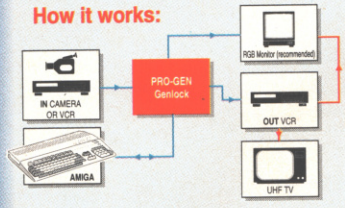
PRO-GEN Amiga Genlock

The Pro-gen AMIGA Genlock allows you to mix your Amiga display with any PAL video signal whether it is from a VCR, Laserdisk player or a Camcorder. In fact any item of video equipment which outputs a PAL composite video signal.Combined with the Amiga computer the Pro-Gen gives you the facilities of a special effects & video titling suite. Take your own films & give them a professional look by OVERLAYING TITLES or by SUPER IMPOSING YOUR OWN GRAPHICS created in packages like Spectracolor or Deluxe Paint. Pro-Gen is supplied with Oxxi's Spectra-color paint & animation package.

FREE

In Spectracolor every drawing tool and animation control is at your finger tips - over 50 tools in the fast menu Toolkit, plus point and click access to all 4096 colours, with independent right and left mouse button colours & modes. Add automatic animation generation easy mouse controls for all functions, and the ability to paint with multi-page animated brushes, and you've got a powerful tool for artistic expression. With animation controls this easy it's simple to put your ideas into motion. Forget co-ordinate systems and reference numbers just move objects with the mouse in this intuitive and friendly graphical environment. Spectracolor supports both ANIM & IFF file formats, and all the video modes of the Amiga, including HAM! (Spectracolor requires min. 1Mb. memory)

How it works:



STOP PRESS

PRO-GEN... NOW INCLUDES A VERY VERSATILE MULTI COMPONENT VIDEO TO GENLOCK CONNECTING CABLE KIT. THIS ALLOWS PRO-GEN TO BE USED STRAIGHTAWAY WITH MOST POPULAR VIDEO EQUIPMENT, WITHOUT THE NEED TO HUNT DOWN THE CORRECT CONNECTING CABLES. THIS KIT CAN ALSO BE USED TO CONNECT IN OTHER WAYS... eg. VCR TO VCR etc.
A KIT TO START YOU OFF RIGHT FROM THE MOMENT YOU OPEN THE BOX!!!

PRO-GEN & Spectracolor ONLY £129.95

Mode Switch-box for Genlocks

Features Include
-Compatible With The Pro-Gen And Rendale 8802
-Supplied With Genlock Extender Cable Worth £9.95
-Switch-box Switches Between Foreground, Background, Video And Computer Modes.

£29.95

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AMIGA STORAGE DEVICES

Commodore A590 20Mb HD

Features Include
- ☆ Connects to sidecar bus on left hand side of Amiga A500
- ☆ Autoboots with Kickstart 1.3
- ☆ Sockets For Up to 2 Mb of RAM
- ☆ DMA Access
- ☆ External SCSI Port
- ☆ Complete With Power Supply

A590 Hard Disk Including 512K RAM Only **£299.95**

A590 Hard Disk Including 1 Mb. RAM Only **£319.95**

A590 Hard Disk Including 2 Mb. RAM Only **£349.95**

Cumana CAX354 3.5" External 2nd Disk Drive.
- ☆ Features Include
- ☆ Long connecting cable
- ☆ 1Mb, (880K Formatted) Capacity
- ☆ Enable/Disable Switch,
- ☆ Throughport
- ☆ Access Light
- ☆ Compatible with Amiga 500/1000/1500/2000/3000 and CDTV

£57.95

SUPRA 500XP 52-105Mb HARD DISK DRIVE WITH MEMORY EXPANSION UP TO 8Mb.

Features Include:
- ☆ Capacities of 52/80/105Mb available
- ☆ Connects to sidecar bus on L/H side of Amiga A500
- ☆ Autoboots with Kickstart 1.3, boot enable/disable switch
- ☆ Sockets for up to 8 Mb of FASTRAM with enable/disable switch
- ☆ Autoboots With Kickstart 1.3
- ☆ SCSI Port & Amiga bus pass thru allows other devices to be connected
- ☆ Includes Express Copy hard drive Back-up Software
- ☆ The 52 Mb version powered by your Amiga (High Current Power Supply is only optional).

*High Current Power Supply is required for 80Mb. and 105 Mb versions.

Only... **£49.95**

SUPRA PRICES

RAM SIZE	STORAGE CAPACITY 52Mb.	80Mb.	105Mb.
1Mb.	£479.95	*£539.95	*£629.95
2Mb.	£499.95	*£569.95	*£649.95
4Mb.	£699.95	*£749.95	*£849.95
8Mb.	£899.95	*949.95	*1049.95

Please don't forget to add the cost of Power Supply when calculating price of 80/105Mb. drives

EDUCATION SOFTWARE

DON'T JUST PLAY GAMES WHEN YOU CAN LEARN WITH YOUR AMIGA TOO!

PRIMARY MATHS COURSE - Ages 3 to 12, Complete 24 Programme Course. £21.95

BETTER MATHS - Ages 12 to 16, Higher level to Linear & Quadratic Equations. £21.95

MICRO MATHS - 24 easy to use programs for GCSE ('O' Level) revision or self tuition £21.95

MEGA MATHS - A 9 level step by step tuition course. For mature beginners, 'A' Level studies & Micro Maths users £21.95

MICRO FRENCH - GCSE French tuition or revision course. Covers both spoken & written French £21.95

MICRO ENGLISH - A complete programe of self-tuition up to GCSE standard £21.95

THE THREE BEARS - Ages 5 -10, Develops imaginative thought/reading skills. £22.95

SPELL BOOK - Ages 4 to 6, Developed with the help of a Primary School Head Teacher to aid spelling skills. £17.95

PLAY AND READ - Ages 4 to 9, The complete reading tutor. Part 2 teaches spelling to the beginner at reading. £18.95

AMIGA PERIPHERAL PACKS

TWO GREAT PACKAGES THAT SAVE YOU MORE MONEY!

These two packs are aimed at the user who needs to get a great deal from his Amiga. A superb quality monitor, the PHILIPS CM8833/II has been put with your choice of either the CITIZEN SWIFT9 or the CITIZEN SWIFT 24 printer. You choose, but whichever combination you have the price has been designed to SAVE YOU MONEY. Buying together will save you £££'s!

PERIPHERAL PACK 1-CM8833/II + Citizen Swift 9

Only... **£469.95** With a FREE PEN PAL worth £79.95

PERIPHERAL PACK 2 -CM8833 + Citizen Swift 24E

Only... **£569.95** With a FREE PEN PAL worth £79.95

AMIGA SOFTWARE

Music-X: The ultimate software for professional MIDI sequencing. The software includes a configurable librarian and a synthesiser patch editor. All you need to recreate a song can be recalled from one performance file including sequences, MIDI routing, sync setup, keyboard maps & synthesiser or drum machine patch libraries. **NEW LOW PRICES - £54.95 or just £74.95 with midi-interface!**

MIDI INTERFACE (5 Port): In, Out, Through plus 2 switchable thru'/out. Includes cable. £24.95

AMOS: AMOS allows you to access the power of the Amiga with ease. 500 different commands make AMOS a sophisticated development language. The AMOS animation language allows you to create complex animation sequences. 300 page manual and over 80 example programs £49.95

Amos Add on Modules: (BOTH require Amos prog.)
Amos Compiler **Amos 3D**
BUY ALL THREE AMOS PROGRAMS FOR JUST **£89.95**

SuperBase 4: Most powerful database available for the Amiga.Combines the ease of use of SuperBase 2 with a versatile programming language so that you can tailor your data to your own specific needs for club/business/library records etc. £229.95

Lattice C: An ideal tool for the C programmer whether experienced or a novice. The best way to create applications for the Amiga.Fully supports Motorola chipset. Nearly 300 functions optimised to help the user write the tightest possible code. Includes screen editor. Most Amiga C books are based around lattice. (Requires either 2 floppy drives OR a hard disk drive) £199.95

Deluxe Paint IV: Latest version of the Amigas first, and still the best, paint and animation package, now including HAM mode. (1 Mb. minimum memory or more recommended) £79.95

Vidi, The Complete Colour Solution: Vidi with RGB Splitter, Frame Grabber & Digitiser. Grabs moving colour video into 16 grey scale frames (up to 16 frames in 1Mb. Amiga) and digitises from still colour video source in up to 4096 colours in less than 1 second! Requires home VCR or video camera for grabbing. Requires video camera or VCR with perfect pause for digitising. Now comes with Spectracolor FREE!!! £179.95

MASTERSOUND: High quality "mono" sampler (best for sampling instruments etc.) £36.95

Pen Pal V.1.3

WORD PROCESSOR/DATABASE

With Pen Pal you can mix text, 4096 colour graphics & data in ways no other w/p can! "It's handling of graphics is unsurpassed: Pen Pal is the only word processor I tested that will automatically wrap text round graphics.. **Amiga World, July '90**

£79.95
PEN PAL Vers 1.3 WITH 512K Amiga RAM Expansion only...£99.95!

THE ABOVE IS JUST A SMALL SAMPLE FROM OUR EXTENSIVE RANGE OF THOUSANDS OF SERIOUS, EDUCATION AND RECREATION TITLES.WE CAN'T LIST THEM ALL HERE SO PLEASE CALL US IF YOU CAN'T SEE THE PROGRAM YOU REQUIRE, IT'S PROBABLY IN STOCK!

If you're thinking about presents why not buy a Harwoods Gift Voucher (all values available).

Enquiries & Order Line:

0773 836781

Finance Facilities Available*

Please phone us for information and your personal application pack.

GORDON HARWOOD HARWOOD HARWOOD Computers

ALFRETON DERBYSHIRE

The Closer you look, The Better we look.

**Finance terms are available (subject to status) for most products; please see our ordering panel at the end of this advert for full details*

FREE... Fully Tailored Dust Cover with all Dot Matrix Printers

PRINTERS

NEW LOWER PRICES!!!

All printers in our range include the following standard features...

☆ Standard Centronics parallel port unless otherwise stated for direct connection to Amiga, PC's, ST etc. and come with a:

☆ FREE CONNECTOR LEAD & A FREE TAILORED DUST COVER!

When you are comparing our prices to others make sure that the same essential items are included eg. Printer Lead, Dust Cover, Postage and VAT etc.

CITIZEN 120D+ 9 PIN MONO - Up to 120/25 cps — £149.95
- ❑ Very reliable low cost printer with interchangable interfaces for Centronics/RS232/serial type (C64 etc.)
- ❑ Full 2 Year manufacturers warranty

NEW FASTER STAR LC20 9 PIN MONO - Up to 150/38 cps — £159.95
Replacement for our most popular Mono Dot-Matrix at a super low price
- ❑ Multiple font options easily accessible from front panel
- ❑ Excellent paper handling facilities
- ❑ Simultaneous, continuous and single sheet stationery
- ❑ 240 x 240 dpi Graphics

CITIZEN 124D 24 PIN MONO - 120/40 cps — £199.95
- ❑ 360 dpi - 24 Pin MONO with 3 Fonts
- ❑ 8K Buffer - Expandable to 32K
- ❑ 3 Fonts, Superb letter quality
- ❑ Full 2 Year Warranty
- ❑ Feed for labels & multi-part stationery
- ❑ Complete paper parking facilities.

STAR LC 24/10 24 PIN MONO - 150/50 cps — £214.95
24 Pin version of the Star LC Series with
- ❑ Exceptional letter print quality
- ❑ 360 x 360 dpi Graphics
- ❑ Additional font cartridges available
- ❑ 8 resident fonts

STAR LC200 9 PIN COLOUR PRINTER - 185/40 cps — £209.95
This is the one in our packs!
- ❑ 80 Column Dot Matrix
- ❑ 240 dpi - 9 Pin COLOUR
- ❑ 16K Buffer, 8 Resident Fonts
- ❑ Push/pull tractor & rear/bottom feeds
- ❑ Reverse paper feeds
- ❑ Micro paper feed, Max. paper width 11.7"
- ❑ Supplied with colour & mono ribbons
- ❑ Paper park with auto single sheet loading
- ❑ Programmable from front panel.
- ❑ 12 month warranty

CITIZEN SWIFT 9 PIN COLOUR - 160/40cps — £219.95
New super high spec 9Pin colour printer
- ❑ 8K Buffer 4 Fonts
- ❑ Push and pull tractor built-in
- ❑ Feed for labels/multi part stationery
- ❑ 240 x 240 dpi Colour Graphics
- ❑ Best text quality in our 9Pin range
- ❑ 2 Year Citizen warranty

STAR LC24/200 24 PIN MONO - 220/55 cps — £249.95
New Star 24 pin that means business!
- ❑ 80 Column Dot Matrix
- ❑ 360 dpi - 24 Pin MONO
- ❑ 7K Buffer expandable to 39K
- ❑ 10 Resident Fonts
- ❑ Front Panel Pitch Selection
- ❑ Push/pull tractor & rear/bottom feeds
- ❑ Reverse paper feed
- ❑ Paper park with auto single sheet loading
- ❑ Micro paper feed, Max. paper width 11.7"
- ❑ Supplied with mono ribbon
- ❑ Faster than the old LC24-10
- ❑ Extra font cartridges available
- ❑ Program from front panel, No DIP switches
- ❑ 12 month warranty

STAR LC24/200 24 PIN COLOUR - 220/55 cps — £299.95
Colour version of the LC24-200 Mono but with expandable 30K Buffer.

NEW 24 Pin CITIZEN 224 COLOUR - 160/53 cps — £259.95
Brand New, lowest cost colour 24 Pin printer, anywhere!
- ❑ 80 Column Dot Matrix with 4 Fonts
- ❑ 360 dpi - 24 Pin COLOUR
- ❑ 8K Buffer expandable to 32K
- ❑ Easy to use front panel controls
- ❑ Push & pull tractor feeds
- ❑ Complete paper parking facilities.
- ❑ Supplied with mono & colour ribbons
- ❑ Full 2 Year Citizen Warranty

NEW 24 Pin CITIZEN SWIFT 24E COLOUR - 180/60 cps — £319.95
Brand New, superb specification colour 24 Pin printer.
- ❑ 80 Column Dot Matrix with 7 Fonts
- ❑ 360 dpi - 24 Pin COLOUR
- ❑ 8K Buffer expandable to 32K
- ❑ Easy to use LCD panel controls
- ❑ Push/pull & bottom tractor feeds
- ❑ Complete paper parking facilities.
- ❑ Supplied with mono & colour ribbons
- ❑ Full 2 Year Citizen Warranty

CITIZEN SWIFT 24 PIN COLOUR - 160/50 cps — Phone for very special prices!
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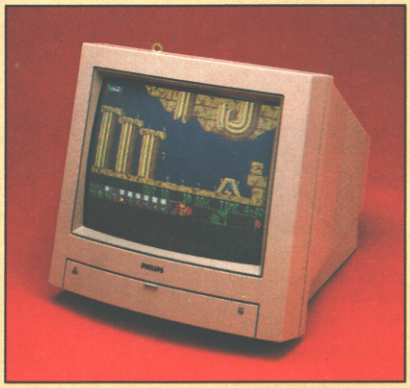

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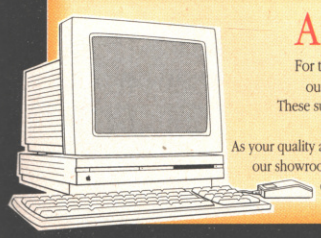

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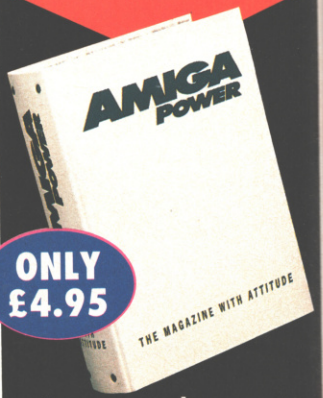

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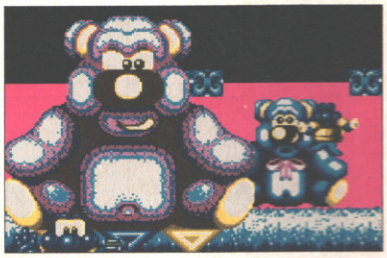

Many slick, fast arcade games are judged against the best 16-bit console stuff – *Robocod* is one that can actually stand such comparisons. Hilarious, original, superbly crafted, and if not quite as fast as *Sonic the Hedgehog*, damn close, this is quite simply one of the best Amiga fun products of the year.

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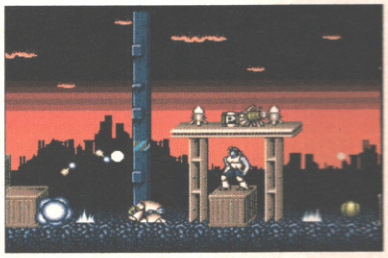

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AFRIKA KORPS
Impressions £29.99

Uppers – Intelligent opponents set it apart from the standard wargame. ***Downers*** – But not enough to give it any flair. ***The Bottom Line*** – Just because it's a wargame, it doesn't mean it has to be this primitive. ★

AH37-M THUNDERHAWK
Core £30.99

Uppers – The fastest, slickest 3D graphics yet to grace the Amiga. ***Downers*** – The lack of real sim elements may put some off, and the mouse control is a bit unwieldy. ***The Bottom Line*** – A brilliantly executed arcade-simulation crossover, which captures the frenetic helicopter feel quite excellently. ★★★★★

ALPHA WAVES
Infogrames £25.99

Uppers – Nice 3D bouncing romp. Bizarre, but endearing. ***Downers*** – It tends to feel like an executive toy, and a very expensive one at that. ***The Bottom Line*** – A novel diversion but no great shakes. ★★

ALTERED DESTINY
Accolade £29.99

Uppers – An absorbing adventure in true American style. ***Downers*** – It's not really anything new, and it sure isn't up to Lucasfilm standards. ***The Bottom Line*** – You could do worse, but you could certainly do better. ★★★

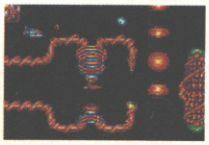
AMIGA ENCOUNTER
Novagen £20.42

Uppers – Very fast and atmospheric. ***Downers*** – It's just *Battlezone* yet again. Incredibly thin gameplay for a full-price 16-bitter. ***The Bottom Line*** – Good old-fashioned zooming' n' blasting fun, but it really should have been a budget game. ★★★

ARMOUR-GEDDON
Psygnosis £25.99

Uppers – Lots of tanks, lots of planes, lots of places to go. It's deep and wide and tall (and good-looking to boot). ***Downers*** – Takes a lot of self-discipline to play properly. ***The Bottom Line*** – A natural successor to *Carrier Command*, and – it has to be said – a worthy one too.★★★★

ARMALYTE
Thalamus £25.99



Uppers – Enjoyable in an old-fashioned sort of way. ***Downers*** – Sloppy presentation and inadequate design. ***The Bottom Line*** – Totally eclipsed by Activision's *R-Type II*. ★★

ARNHEM
CCS £19.95

Uppers – A 8-bit classic wargame finally brought to Amiga owners. ***Downers*** – ...but nobody really wanted it anyway. ***The Bottom Line*** – Primitive beyond belief – even wargamers should give it a wide berth. ★

A-10 TANK KILLER
Dynamix (Sierra) £35.75

Uppers – A wealth of typical flight sim-style detail, and a genuine feeling of taking part in a major conflict. ***Downers*** – Gameplay suffers due to the sluggish frame rate and lack of a real flying 'feel'. ***The Bottom Line*** – A interesting but flawed attempt at taking the flight simulation genre a stage further. ★★★

ATOMINO
Psygnosis £25.99

Uppers – Easy to pick up, with thousands of levels to keep you going. ***Downers*** – Can covalent bonding be fun? We're not sure. Rather samey; very tough; crap music. ***The Bottom Line*** – Slightly similar to *Pipe Mania* in some ways – if you liked that, try this. ★★★

BACK TO THE FUTURE PART III
Image Works £24.99

Uppers – Variety, neat animation, some decent jokes. ***Downers*** – But film licences nearly always feel too thin to be worth 25 quid... ***The Bottom Line*** – ...and this one's no different. Fun but slight. ★★★

BADLANDS
Tengen (Domark) £19.99

Uppers – A close conversion... ***Downers*** – ...of a crap overhead-view arcade race game. ***The Bottom Line*** – So workmanlike its jeans hang over its arse. ★★

THE BALL GAME
Electronic Zoo £25.99

Uppers – Based on the excellent but un-released *Infection* puzzle game. ***Downers*** – The concept is spoiled by senseless changes to the rules. ***The Bottom Line*** – Interesting, but ineptly executed. ★★

THE BARD'S TALE III – THIEF OF FATE
Electronic Arts £24.99

Uppers – A satisfying bout of monster bashing to appeal to the usual *Bard's Tale* mob. ***Downers*** – New ideas and fancy programming are sadly lacking. ***The Bottom Line*** – Monumentally unspectacular, but kinda nice all the same. One for the hardened D&D freak. ★★★

B.A.T.
Ubi Soft £29.99

Uppers – Intergalactic intrigue in a novel interactive comic book style. ***Downers*** – Perhaps a little too left-of-centre for some. ***The Bottom Line*** – Very different, and actually very good. ★★★

BATTLE CHESS II – CHINESE CHESS
Electronic Arts £25.99

Uppers – Cute graphics, and a new angle on the chess theme. ***Downers*** – The animations soon become

tiresome, and Chinese chess isn't half as interesting as the standard game. ***The Bottom Line*** – Good as a showpiece, but a failure as a piece of playable software. ★★

BATTLE COMMAND
Ocean £24.99

Uppers – Loads of missions, atmospheric solid 3D graphics (ie lots of green), plus a good mix of strategy and blasting. ***Downers*** – Takes a while to get into; some odd (and impossible to complete) missions. ***The Bottom Line*** – If you've got the self-discipline to persevere past an uninspiring start, this is a worthy follow-up to the classic *Carrier Command*. ★★★

BEAST BUSTERS
Activision £25.99

Uppers – Graphically close to the original. ***Downers*** – Slows down when there's a lot happening, and it's far too easy. ***The Bottom Line*** – Doesn't compare too well with all the other *Op Wolf* games on the Amiga. ★★

BIG BUSINESS
Magic Bytes £25.99

Uppers – Well-programmed and a fairly original concept. Would you believe, a 'humorous business simulation'? ***Downers*** – It's true, though the humour is feeble-witted stereotyping, and the business part is tedious number-crunching. ***The Bottom Line*** – Some nice touches, but at the end of the day it just isn't any fun to play at all. ★★

BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE
Capstone (Accolade) £24.99

Uppers – In our humble opinion, a most excellent subject for a licence. The game even manages to capture some of the flavour of the bodacious film too. ***Downers*** – But that doesn't stop it being a strong contender for the 'Weakest Gameplay In The World' award. ***The Bottom Line*** – Something of a missed opportunity. Let's hope for better things if they make a game of the film sequel... ★★

BILLIARDS II SIMULATOR
Infogrames £25.99

Uppers – Plenty of variations, including 'crazy pool' with an octagonal table. ***Downers*** – Neither the 2D or 3D modes allow a decent shot to be made, and the 'feel' of the sport is lost completely. ***The Bottom Line*** – Another game which crumbles in the face of its competition, this time in the form of *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*. ★★

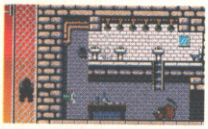
BLADE WARRIOR
Image Works £25.99

Uppers – Pretty breathtaking graphics, with plenty of action and puzzling too. ***Downers*** – The gameplay is unlikely to be to everyone's taste. ***The Bottom Line*** – Possibly the most atmospheric game ever. ★★★★

BLUE MAX
Mindscape £34.99

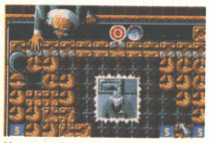
Uppers – Less techie than most flying thangs. Some rather spiffing sound compliments the WWI feel nicely. ***Downers*** – Not a winner in the user-friendliness stakes, and the slow and sloppy main game never (ahem) really takes off. ***The Bottom Line*** – Dull. *Not* the definitive bi-plane game for Biggles buffs it should have been. ★

THE BLUES BROTHERS
Titus £25.99



Uppers – So playable its frightening. And it's funny too. ***Downers*** – The two player mode is a wasted opportunity. ***The Bottom Line*** – Probably the best character licence ever to appear on the Amiga. ★★★★★

BOSTON BOMB CLUB
Silmarils £25.99



Uppers – A neat twist on the sliding block type of puzzle game. ***Downers*** – It hasn't got the longest game life ever, and the basic concept won't exactly light everybody's fire. ***The Bottom Line*** – One of the better puzzlers we've seen lately. Pleasing, fun and very French. ★★★

BOTICS
Krisalis £19.99

Uppers – Nice sound; futuristic graphics. ***Downers*** – Absolutely dire *Pong*-style gameplay. ***The Bottom Line*** – Get out of here! ★

BRAIN BLASTERS
Ubi Soft £25.99

Uppers – Well, there's a simultaneous two player mode. ***Downers*** – But it's only really remotely playable when played solo. ***The Bottom Line*** – A sad, simplistic and ineffective puzzler. ★

This month sees the biggest change to the Bottom Line since, well, May this year when AMIGA POWER (and thus The Bottom Line) first started – it's gone up a whole page in size, from six to seven pages. The reason is clear – as more and more games have been released towards the latter half of this year, we've been struggling to fit all the new ones in (without chucking out far too many of the old, that is). As it is, we'd been getting to the stage where this wasn't really a complete listing of the last year's games at all – more like the last nine or ten months. Something had to change, and now it has (let's just hope we don't have to go up to eight or so in the near future!)

THE BOTTOM LINE

RATINGS: ★★★★★ Excellent ★★★★★ Nearly there ★★★★ Very good ★★★ Has its moments ★★ Flawed ★ Dire

BRAT
Image Works £24.99

Uppers – Very pretty, very smooth, very challenging. ***Downers*** – ...and very, very irritating indeed, especially if you hate the central character. ***The Bottom Line*** – Okay if you play it with the sound off.
★★★

BREACH 2
Impressions £24.99

Uppers – Stick with it and you'll find an immensely rewarding space/strategy blast with loads of levels. ***Downers*** – Scrappy graphics and some awkward quirks will deter many. ***The Bottom Line*** – Loved *Laser Squad*? Then you'll probably take a shine to *Breach 2*. ★★

BRIGADE COMMANDER
Electronic Zoo £25.99

Uppers – Desert Storm scenarios give it a nice touch of topicality. ***Downers*** – The usual crap graphics. ***The Bottom Line*** – Friendlier than the average wargame, and more playable too.
★★★

CADAVER
Image Works £24.99

Uppers – Gorgeously atmospheric graphics; a good mix of puzzling and hacking. ***Downers*** – One or two irritating moments and it's all a bit lacking in the excitement department. ***The Bottom Line*** – A nice blend of 3D graphics and adventuring (but it's not a classic). ★★★

CADAVER – THE PAYOFF
Renegade £16.99

Uppers – A wonderful add-on for fans of the first *Cadaver*. ***Downers*** – Not a lot of use for anyone else though. ***The Bottom Line*** – If you've got the original, this isn't such a bad price to pay for more of the same. ★★★

THE CARDINAL OF THE KREMLIN
Accolade £24.99

Uppers – Reasonably captivating and accessible strategy. ***Downers*** – Ridiculous arcade sequence dropped slap bang in the

middle of the game almost totally destroys the atmosphere. ***The Bottom Line*** – Alarmingly stupid design blows what could have been a winner. ★★

CARTHAGE
Psygnosis £24.99

Uppers – Excellent graphics and some nifty arcade sequences from the masters of slick programming. ***Downers*** – But underneath it's a distinctly average strategy game. ***The Bottom Line*** – Despite appearances, not one for the joystick junkies out there. ★★★

CENTURION
Electronic Arts £24.99

Uppers – Fairly interesting management sections with some nifty battle sequences. ***Downers*** – Two appalling arcade sections blow its chances. ***The Bottom Line*** – Un-balanced. ★★

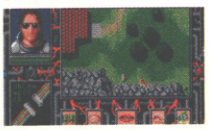
CHALLENGE GOLF
On-Line £24.99

Uppers – Easy to get into, and up to four players catered for. ***Downers*** – Mind-numbingly unrealistic putting sequence, and loads of unnecessary little bugs. ***The Bottom Line*** – Lack of playability makes this a seriously below-par golf sim. Go for *PGA Tour Golf* instead. ★

CHAMPION OF THE RAJ
Image Works £25.99

Uppers – Arcade sequences break up the heavy-duty strategy action. ***Downers*** – Even more ridiculous disk accessing than usual in this type of thing. Crap programming generally. ***The Bottom Line*** – Potentially good game ruined by complete lack of playability. ★

CHAOS IN ANDROMEDA
On-Line £24.99



Uppers – Lots of character interaction and plenty to do. ***Downers*** – Crap fight sequences and tiny graphics. ***The Bottom Line*** – Enjoyable *Ultima*-style adventure slightly spoiled by sloppy programming. Still good fun though.
★★★

CHAOS STRIKES BACK
Mirrorsoft £24.99

Uppers – Complex and ingenious puzzles; very user friendly; great sound. ***Downers*** – Slightly old fashioned looking. ***The Bottom Line*** – Engrossing role playing adventure using the *Dungeon Master* game system.
★★★★

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE
Impressions £29.99

Uppers – Visually impressive wargame, with instant appeal and plenty of user-friendly presentation. ***Downers*** – Things fall down in the wargaming aspect of things, with some rather silly rules. ***The Bottom Line*** – A very brave try, but it doesn't quite reach the heights to which it aspires. ★★★

CHUCK ROCK
Core Design £24.99

Uppers – A first class caveman romp, with some innovation in the gameplay for once. ***Downers*** – A touch shallow and a touch easy. ***The Bottom Line*** – Pretty brilliant platformer, one of the Amiga's very best. ★★★★

CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER 2.0
Electronic Arts £24.99

Uppers – A veritable air force of planes to fly, with piles of options, missions and the obligatory load of external views. There's even the opportunity to fly the Space Shuttle. ***Downers*** – A complete lack of speed, bad disk access and naff perspective put the dampers on the whole affair. ***The Bottom Line*** – Low flying flight sim – fails to stay with the competition.
★★★

CHIP'S CHALLENGE
US Gold £24.99

Uppers – Lots and lots of levels; typically well thought out console-style gameplay. ***Downers*** – Simplistic graphics; lack of depth. ***The Bottom Line*** – Good, but not the most characterful of puzzle games, and not the cheapest either. ★★★

COHORT
Impressions £29.99

Uppers – (Relatively) excellent graphics and helpful user-interface make things accessible. ***Downers*** – The game is not without flaws, and the controls system isn't as good as it should be. ***The Bottom Line*** – A fine off-beat wargame, but overpriced. ★★

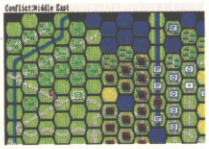
THE COLONEL'S BEQUEST
Sierra £34.99

Uppers – Mildly intriguing whodunit, with that ever so familiar Sierra style of presentation. ***Downers*** – Terrible graphics, hours of tedium. ***The Bottom Line*** – Overpriced and over here. Sierra can do much better than this.★★

COMMANDO
Elite £19.99

Uppers – Lovingly recreated coin-op blast-'em scroller. The game that launched a thousand scrolling war blasters (*Mercs, Warzone et al*). ***Downers*** – As fashionable as an anorak. ***The Bottom Line*** – Classic stuff, but not a good indication of the Amiga's capabilities. ★★★

CONFLICT MIDDLE EAST
SSI/US Gold £30.99



Uppers – A wargame in the traditional sense, but executed very well indeed. ***Downers*** – The wargame label is no longer a valid excuse for a program looking so dated. ***The Bottom Line*** – Of limited interest, even to hardened wargamers. ★★★

COUGAR FORCE
Tomahawk £19.99

Uppers – The box is quite interesting (actually that's a bit of a lie). ***Downers*** – Everything. The sound, the graphics, the gameplay – all dire in the extreme. ***The Bottom Line*** – A perfect present for pyromaniacs. ★

CRIME DOES NOT PAY
Titus £25.95

Uppers – Er...reasonable(ish) graphics? ***Downers*** – Terrible gameplay, pathetic humour, atrocious design, useless plot...shall we go on? I think not. ***The Bottom Line*** – Crime doesn't pay. This game is a software crime, so work it out for yourself. ★

CRIME WAVE
US Gold £24.95

Uppers – Gore galore; the numerous video interludes spice it up a bit. ***Downers*** – The actual game is dull in the extreme, and the waiting between levels is monstrous. ***The Bottom Line*** – A bog-standard blast-'em-up with knobs on. ★

CRUISE FOR A CORPSE
Delphine/US Gold £27.99

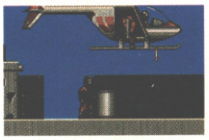
Uppers – Superbly-designed plot, lovely graphics, and the usual compulsive quality you expect from Delphine. ***Downers*** – Loads (and loads) of disk-accessing, and even when you've got the solution it seemingly takes eight hours to play it through to the end. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not flawless, but still an absolutely lovely game, and a worthy companion to *Monkey Island*.
★★★★★

CYBERCON III
US Gold £24.99

Uppers – Brilliant sense of 'being there', and better Freescape than

Freescape. ***Downers*** – Predictably, not all that accessible to your average game player. ***The Bottom Line*** – Well worth the effort of getting into. ★★★★★

DARKMAN
Ocean £25.99



Uppers – The driving section is imaginative and fun. ***Downers*** – Everything else is hackneyed, licence-by-numbers rubbish. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not quite as bad as *Total Recall* and *Nightbreed*, but not very much better either. The worst film game for quite some time. ★★

DAS BOOT
Mindscape £29.99

Uppers – The most accessible sub sim to date. ***Downers*** – ...but that still doesn't make it particularly accessible. ***The Bottom Line*** – Playable, but overpriced. The best in its field. ★★★

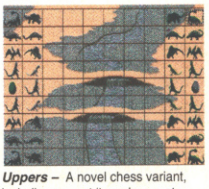
DEATH KNIGHTS OF KRYNN
SSI / US Gold £25.99

Uppers – A great improvement on the previous *Krynn* role-players. ***Downers*** – But compared to the mighty *Eye Of The Beholder*, this is very average indeed. ***The Bottom Line*** – A nice enough product, but nothing very spectacular. ★★★

DEUTEROS
Activision £25.99

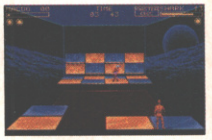
Uppers – An incredibly huge and absorbing game, with challenges that seem perfectly paced to be in tune with the developing game-skills of the average player. ***Downers*** – Visually it can be a bit of a yawn. ***The Bottom Line*** – Don't be fooled by the strategy exterior – this is a game that everyone should try.
★★★★★

DINO WARS
Magic Bytes £25.99



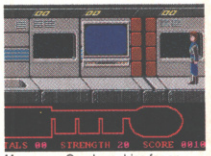
Uppers – A novel chess variant, including a great 'two players at once' option where you don't have to wait for the other player to move. ***Downers*** – The central beat-'em-up section is a bit crap, and the game as a whole is over-simplistic. ***The Bottom Line*** – A nice idea, but asking £25 for it is a bit of a cheek – there just isn't enough to it. ★★

DISC
Loriciel £24.99



Uppers – A few nice graphical touches. ***Downers*** – Appallingly-designed gameplay with very little actual action. ***The Bottom Line*** – A crappy *Discs Of Tron* rip-off without most of the original's good features. ★

DISCOVERY
Micro Illusions £25.99



Uppers – Good graphics for an educational game. ***Downers*** – For a game which relies heavily on speech synthesis, the speech quality is terrible. ***The Bottom Line*** – Tricky to play and educationally dubious, this is a bit of a flop. ★★

DRAGON BREED
Activision £24.99

Uppers – A near perfect arcade conversion; niftily animated main dragon sprite. ***Downers*** – The zillionth sideways scrolling shoot-'em-up of last year. ***The Bottom Line*** – One instinctively knows when a conversion is right. ★★★★

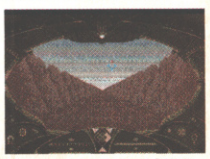
DRAGONS OF FLAME
SSI (US Gold) £24.99

Uppers – Almost instant playability – not something you'd expect from a role playing game. ***Downers*** – A bit simplistic for real Dungeons & Dragons fans. ***The Bottom Line*** – An excellent introduction to the new bread of fantasy RPGs. ★★★

DRAGON'S LAIR II
Readysoft £44.95

Uppers – Really incredibly gorgeous cartoon graphics. ***Downers*** – Minimal player interaction and a ridiculous price tag. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not the best value game in the world. ★★

ECO PHANTOMS
Electronic Zoo £25.99



Uppers – A nice line in H.G.Wells sci-fi theatrics and some unusual sub-sections give *Eco Phantoms* a highly original flavour. ***Downers*** – The parts don't actually add up to very much, and the copy protection system could induce bouts of violence. ***The Bottom Line*** – A reasonable 3D routine masquerading as a game. ★

EDD THE DUCK
Impulze £24.99

Uppers – *Rainbow Islands*-inspired gameplay ensures some level of interest. ***Downers*** – But the whole thing just doesn't

inspire, and the difficulty is placed too high for a young audience. ***The Bottom Line*** – Your granny might buy you one. ★★

ELF
Ocean £25.39

Uppers – An excellent arcade adventure romp, with enough interesting little extras to make it fresh. ***Downers*** – These things are getting just a little bit old-fashioned, aren't they? ***The Bottom Line*** – A good solid game from the Ocean stable, but not a world beater. ★★★★

ELVIRA – MISTRESS OF THE DARK
Accolade £24.99

Uppers – Elvira's gorgeous; the graphics really draw the player in. ***Downers*** – Pity the game itself is nigh on impossible – and it takes five disks! ***The Bottom Line*** – Falls apart due to disk swapping and infuriating gameplay. ★★

EMLYN HUGHES' ARCADE QUIZ
Audiogenic £24.99

Uppers – Just like a pub quiz machine... ***Downers*** – ...but with Emlyn Hughes in it (and no real cash prizes). ***The Bottom Line*** – Oh dear. ★

ESWAT
US Gold £24.99

Uppers – As conversions go, it's not a complete nightmare... ***Downers*** – ...but let's be honest, the arcade original was duff, duff, duff. ***The Bottom Line*** – A reasonable conversion of a terminally average game. ★

SUPERLEAGUE
CDS £24.99

Uppers – A surprisingly involving footy strategy thing in the *Football Manager* vein. ***Downers*** – They're not still making these things are they? ***The Bottom Line*** – A dated idea – it sounds tedious but it's actually executed quite commendably. ★★

EXILE
Audiogenic £24.99

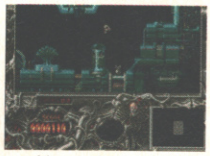
Uppers – Real-world physics incorporated into an arcade game, it's more of a true arcade adventure than most games bearing that tag. ***Downers*** – Rather primitive graphics, and not the most instantly playable game ever. ***The Bottom Line*** – A great arcade adventure, but it might not be your cup of tea if you're an action fan. ★★★★★

EXTERMINATOR
Audiogenic £24.99

Uppers – Very original (read 'very, very odd indeed') arcade thing, well converted to retain the original's feel. ***Downers*** – Confusing initially, but once you've played it for a while it's...confusing. ***The Bottom Line*** – Great fun, but it doesn't really make it in the longevity stakes. ★★★

THE EXECUTIONER
Hawk £25.99

Uppers – A playable enough *Thrust*-variant, with one or two extra bits tacked on (such as the tasteful torture scenes). ***Downers*** – The



core of the game just isn't exciting or different enough to give *The Executioner* that 'one more go' appeal. ***The Bottom Line*** – Fine if you don't mind the slightly repetitive gameplay, and significant lack of action. ★★

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

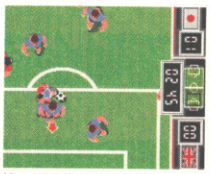
SSI (US Gold) £29.99

Uppers – Takes *Dungeon Master* a step further. Excellent atmosphere and graphics. ***Downers*** – Despite being better than *DM*, it's not actually very different from it at all. ***The Bottom Line*** – The best D&D game yet for the Amiga. (Or, indeed, for anything else.) ★★★★★

F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II
MicroProse £34.99

Uppers – Graphics to make you gasp, sound effects to get your adrenalin pumping and gameplay to leave you in a quivering heap on the floor. ***Downers*** – Despite the shoot-'em-up nature of things, it can all be a touch too much for the less ambitious games player. ***The Bottom Line*** – Quite possibly the last word in flight sims (so far, anyway). ★★★★★

FIGHTING SOCCER
Activision £24.99



Uppers – The coin-op was mildly amusing(ish). ***Downers*** – You are accused of producing an utterly dull game of the lowest calibre. How do you plead? ***The Bottom Line*** – Guilty as hell. ★

FINAL FIGHT
US Gold £25.99

Uppers – Context-sensitive controls, arcade-true graphics, generally an excellent conversion. ***Downers*** – Then again it's a conversion of a fairly dull formulaic coin-op. ***The Bottom Line*** – Technically impressive and loads of fun to play, this might even knock *IK+* off its 'best Amiga beat-'em-up' perch. (But then again it might not). ★★★★

FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX
MicroProse £34.99

Uppers – Breathtakingly detailed 3D and the finest driving feel yet seen on the Amiga ***Downers*** – The prospect of such an accurate Grand Prix simulation isn't going to appeal to everyone. ***The Bottom Line*** – The best racing game we've ever seen, and possibly the best game to appear on the Amiga. ★★★★★

FLAMES OF FREEDOM - MIDWINTER II
MicroProse £34.99

Uppers – There's loads to do, and the whole thing looks lovely. Hours of fun to be had from the character-designing section alone. ***Downers*** – Lots of stupid holes in the logic, and an uncomfortable balance between the strategy and action aspects. ***The Bottom Line*** – Works better in theory than in practice. *Midwinter* fans will love it, but the rest of us are likely to get very bored very quickly. ★★★★

FRENETIC
Core Design £20.99

Uppers – Fast and good-looking. ***Downers*** – You've seen this all before, and done rather more excitingly into the bargain. ***The Bottom Line*** – Slick programming only serves to make *Frenetic* tedious in a professional kind of a way. ★★

GALAXY FORCE II
Activision £24.99

Uppers – An ambitious attempt at a visually stunning coin-op. ***Downers*** – Everything else. ***The Bottom Line*** – If you know you can't do it why bother trying? ★

GARFIELD – THE WINTER'S TAIL
The Edge £24.99

Uppers – Brilliant Jim Davis graphics. ***Downers*** – Crappy Steve Davis gameplay. ***The Bottom Line*** – What a wasted licence. For die-hard fans only. ★

GAUNTLET III
US Gold £25.99

Uppers – A new angle on the arcade classic gives some novelty value, and makes proceedings

sufficiently different this time around. ***Downers*** – The pace is ponderous, there aren't enough baddies, and the speech is badly missed. ***The Bottom Line*** – Fine, but it doesn't really live up to the legend that is *Gauntlet*. ★★★

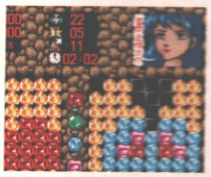
GAZZA II
Empire £24.99

Uppers – Gazza doesn't actually appear in the game much. ***Downers*** – Juddering sprites, poor control (just like the man himself), terrible sound – take your pick. ***The Bottom Line*** – It's enough to reduce you to tears. ★

GEISHA
Tomahawk £25.99

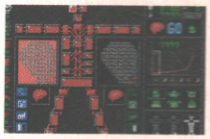
Uppers – Um... you get to see some girls' bits. (Sorry, female readers). ***Downers*** – Tacky and fatuous 'plot', giving way to some of the most unplayable sub-games ever, with presentation of a kind that people used to get arrested for. ***The Bottom Line*** – Could this be the worst full-price game ever reviewed in AMIGA POWER? A five percent mark would suggest so... ★

GEM'X
Demonware £24.99



Uppers – Gorgeous graphics, exquisite sound, beautifully simple mental torture. ***Downers*** – Won't change your mind if you're not into puzzlers. ***The Bottom Line*** – One of the best puzzle games to date. ★★★★

GERM CRAZY
Electronic Zoo £25.99



Uppers – Not quite as expensive as Mindscape's *Life & Death*. ***Downers*** – But with little else in its favour. ***The Bottom Line*** – Another half-baked idea, not followed through properly. (Where do they all come from?) ★

GENGHIS KHAN
Infogrames £39.99

Uppers – Stylish and fairly deep historical strategy game. ***Downers*** – Ridiculously expensive though, and requires a fair dose of manual reading. ***The Bottom Line*** – A bit of a cliché, but 'good if you like that sort of thing.' ★★★

GHOST BATTLE
Thalion £25.53

Uppers – The sound's quite good

and the graphics are okay. ***Downers*** – Everything else is utterly awful. ***The Bottom Line*** – Badly-designed and executed *Ghosts'n'Goblins* clone that's so bad it's scary. ★

GODS
Renegade £25.53

Uppers – Lovely aesthetics, quite involved for a platform game. ***Downers*** – Not quite as good as it's made out to be. ***The Bottom Line*** – Don't believe the hype, but pretty damn good all the same. ★★★★★

GOLDEN AXE
Virgin £24.99

Uppers – Perfect arcade conversion, with every last feature implemented. ***Downers*** – There never really was a lot of variation in the gameplay. ***The Bottom Line*** – Visually stunning, but not different enough to separate it from the usual beat-'em-up. ★★★

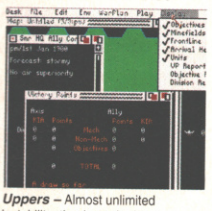
GRAND PRIX MASTER
Dinamic £19.95

Uppers – Endorsed by Jorge Martinez (apparently famous on the 80cc motorcycle circuit). ***Downers*** – Handles like a Reliant Robin. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not to put too fine a point on it, useless. ★

GUNBOAT
Uppers £29.99

Uppers – A sim which actually does something different. ***Downers*** – The action doesn't really convey enough excitement, and the graphics are a little on the primitive side. ***Bottom Line*** – A highly complex sim, this takes quite some time to get drawn into. ★★★

HALLS OF MONTEZUMA
Electronic Arts £25.99



Uppers – Almost unlimited lastability, thanks to the huge numbers of scenarios and variables. ***Downers*** – Off-puttingly complicated, and offers nothing new to the unconverted. ***Bottom Line*** – Well put together, but still strictly for diehards. ★★

HAMMERFIST
Vivid Image (Activision) £24.99

Uppers – Graphically adept arcade adventure with tons of playability and plenty to keep you going. ***Downers*** – Iffy sound. ***The Bottom Line*** – Thoroughly enjoyable (if you like that sort of thing). ★★★

HARD DRIVIN' II
Tengen (Domark) £24.99

Uppers – Refined version of the original – less bugs, a track editor, a neat 'head-to-head' option if you link two machines... ***Downers*** – ...but still glitchy and not a patch on the arcade machine. ***The Bottom Line*** – Souped up, but not souped up enough. ★★

HEART OF THE DRAGON
Avatar Computing £25.99

Uppers – Lots of colours, and an (almost serious) attempt to do something new with the fantasy beat-'em-up. ***Downers*** – Beyond the almost impressive technical trickery lies not very much at all really. ***The Bottom Line*** – If your friend has bought it, give it a go. Then laugh very heartily at him. Entertaining in an embarrassing sort of way. ★

HERO QUEST
Gremlin £25.99

Uppers – Easy to get into, and deceptively addictive. You don't think you've been playing it for long, but suddenly it's Thursday and you're a week late for dinner. ***Downers*** – Not so good as a one-player game. ***The Bottom Line*** – Perhaps surprisingly, a highly entertaining game, and absolutely ideal when you've got game-playing friends round. ★★★★

HERO QUEST: RETURN OF THE WITCHLORD
Gremlin £14.99

Uppers – An add-on module for fans of the original *Hero Quest* who want to take their characters into harder territory. ***Downers*** – Not a lot of use to anybody else, but that's a bit inevitable. ***The Bottom Line*** – If you liked *Hero Quest*, then this is an obvious (and fairly inexpensive) purchase. ★★★★

HILL STREET BLUES
Krisalis £24.99

Uppers – A good feel for the TV series; characters (both player and others) that you can identify with. It's certainly an interesting way to handle a licence. ***Downers*** – Gets repetitive pretty quickly, and it's not

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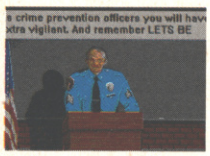


the slickest game around. ***The Bottom Line*** – A good next step for someone who's played *Sim City* to death and fancies a new challenge. Limited appeal, though. ★★★

HORROR ZOMBIES FROM THE CRYPT

Millennium £24.99

Uppers – Unusual idea; suitably spooky graphics. ***Downers*** – But let down by the dull platform nature of the game. ***The Bottom Line*** – Funny to watch, but fairly average to play. ★★

HUDSON HAWK

Ocean £25.99

Uppers – A film licence which actually stands up as a game in its own right. ***Downers*** – The control system can reduce some to tears, and it doesn't match *The Blues Brothers* in the arcade adventure/platform stakes. ***The Bottom Line*** – A well produced, but infuriatingly difficult game. Try before you buy. ★★★★

HUNTER

Activision £25.99

Uppers – Stunning 3D graphics and loads to do. ***Downers*** – The odd little graphical glitch or two. ***Bottom Line*** – Enormously absorbing game – you'll find yourself completely captivated by it for hours on end. ★★★★★

HYDRA

Domark £24.99

Uppers – Um, nice moving-water effect. ***Downers*** – Terrible control feel; duff, unclear graphics; feeble gameplay. ***The Bottom Line*** – An almost-competent conversion of a useless game. ★

INDIANA JONES ADVENTURE

US Gold £19.99

Uppers – More fine-tuning gives *Indy* the friendliest control system yet. It's pretty faithful to the movie too! ***Downers*** – Waiting for Indy to trek across the screen all the time can get annoying and some of the puzzles are just a wee bit too abstract. ***The Bottom Line*** – One of the best Amiga adventures available. ★★★★

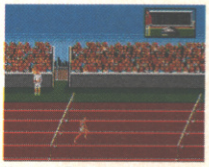
INDIANAPOLIS 500

Electronic Arts £24.95

Uppers – An immensely playable blend of true racing sim and quick track blast, with a nice line in remote camera views (if you've got a 1 meg machine). ***Downers*** – Track repetition hinders lasting appeal. ***The Bottom Line*** – Just fabulous. ★★★★★

INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETICS

Hawk £25.99



Uppers – Tons of fun for those who miss the days of joystick waggling. ***Downers*** – Terrible presentation, and a highly questionable price. ***The Bottom Line*** – If only it had been a tenner cheaper... ★★★

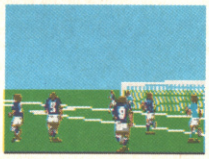
INTERNATIONAL SOCCER CHALLENGE

MicroProse £24.99

Uppers – Soccer in 3D? A very brave attempt to do something new with a tired old game-style... ***Downers*** – ...which unfortunately falls flat on its face. ***The Bottom Line*** – Foul. ★

I PLAY 3D SOCCER

Simulmondo £25.99



Uppers – The most dynamic and visually convincing representation of the sport yet. ***Downers*** – The realism is so high that you hardly ever get to kick the ball, and the 3D display system can be downright confusing. ***The Bottom Line*** – Brave, but ultimately flawed. ★★

IRON LORD

Ubi Soft £24.99

Uppers – Cinemaware-style medieval epic with plenty of sub-games and atmospheric presentation. ***Downers*** – It's just too tough for most, and with little real depth. ***The Bottom Line*** – Ultimately repetitive, but fun for a while. ★★

ISHIDO

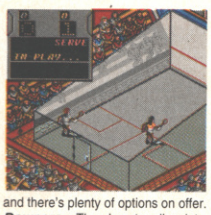
Accolade £24.99

Uppers – Take *Othello*, add some *Go*, then throw in a few herbs and spices and heat until brown. The result is one piping hot Chinese board game called *Ishido*. ***Downers*** – Irritating dialogue boxes, and the luck element can infuriate. ***The Bottom Line*** – An engaging piece of Chinese culture, which should really be played with a good strong cup of tea. ★★

JAHANGIR KHAN'S CHAMPIONSHIP SQUASH

Krisalis £25.53

Uppers – Easy to play, closely adheres to the rules of the real thing,



and there's plenty of options on offer. ***Downers*** – There's not really a lot you can do with a squash game, is there? ***The Bottom Line*** – The best squash game around for the Amiga. (Not that there's much in the way of competition). ★★★

JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER

Virgin £24.99

Uppers – Stunning 3D camera-style view on the action, and the actual rules and physical mechanics of the game are re-created beautifully. ***Downers*** – Well, it's still only snooker. Some extra stats would have been nice too. ***Bottom Line*** – A veritable corker. A classic. A 90 percenter. Need we say more? ★★★★★

JUDGE DREDD

Virgin £24.99

Uppers – Two ancient sub-games offer a real rave from the grave. ***Downers*** – Another *Judge Dredd* game screwed up totally. No humour, no graphics, no game. ***The Bottom Line*** – One day somebody will do justice (ahem) to the legend of Dredd. One day. ★

JUPITER'S MASTERDRIVE

Ubi Soft £24.99

Uppers – Surprisingly playable race game. More fun than a packet of Jammy Dodgers. ***Downers*** – Unspectacular and overpriced. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not sure why, but it really is jolly good fun. ★★

KEEF THE THIEF

Electronic Arts £24.99

Uppers – Excellent hack, slash and puzzle solving with some superb stylised graphics. ***Downers*** – It still plays like your average role-playing adventure. ***The Bottom Line*** – Respectable Tolkien-esque fare. ★★★

THE KILLING CLOUD

Image Works £24.99

Uppers – Fast-moving and pretty graphics, bags of depth, and a great creation of atmosphere. ***Downers*** – Riddled with inconsistencies and badly-executed ideas. ***The Bottom Line*** – Could have been a contender, but badly lets itself down in the logic stakes.★★★

KING'S BOUNTY

New World Computing £25.99

Uppers – Accessible and tidily presented, and far more playable for the non-expert than anything in this field we've seen. ***Downers*** – Nothing beyond the fact that some people won't ever get to grips with this sort of game. ***The Bottom Line*** – Superb D&D-style adventure that's fun for everyone but the most narrow of mind. ★★★★

KING'S QUEST V

Sierra £39.99

Uppers – Beautiful digitised graphics and a very friendly point and click interface. ***Downers*** – The price is one obvious downside, and only hard drive owners should bother. ***The Bottom Line*** – A mighty impressive adventure which takes Sierra to new heights. ★★★★

LAST NINJA 2

System 3 £24.99

Uppers – Excellent 3D isometric graphics and a genuine attempt to inject some strategy into the martial arts genre. ***Downers*** – The game just isn't cohesive, and it plays like a pig. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not really in the Bruce Lee league (barely scraping Jackie Chan level to be honest). ★★

LANCASTER

Actual Screenshots £24.95

Uppers – Fairly impressive 3D polygon graphics. ***Downers*** – Lack of variation and any real excitement means it barely gets off the ground. ***The Bottom Line*** – Elevates averageness to an art form. ★★

LAST NINJA 3

System 3 £25.99

Uppers – Polished presentation and big improvements in look, feel and plot in the ninja's third outing. ***Downers*** – A diabolical control system and one or two flaws in execution prove major irritations. ***The Bottom Line*** – For those who go for these beat-'em-up adventures, *Last Ninja 3* is heaven sent. Others will wish to give it a wide berth. ★★★★

LEISURE SUIT LARRY III

Sierra £34.99

Uppers – Ridiculous, over-sexed plot. Adventuring for consenting adults. ***Downers*** – Slightly obtrusive command parser, and as usual it's over-priced. ***The Bottom Line*** – Check it out – but only if you are over eighteen. ★★★

LEMMINGS

Psygnosis £24.99

Uppers – Utterly bizarre, pleasingly original and totally addictive. Invents a totally new category – the save-'em-up. ***Downers*** – As is the norm with such strikingly original concepts, some may wonder just what all the fuss is about. ***The Bottom Line*** – Love it or loathe it, you can't ignore it. *Lemmings* rule. ★★★★★

LIFE AND DEATH

Mindscape £25.53

Uppers – Excellent packaging (the surgical mask and gloves are wild), and some fairly amusing gameplay keeps things on the boil for a couple of hours. ***Downers*** – Repetition soon sets in – as a long-term challenge it all falls apart quite alarmingly. ***The Bottom Line*** – What's there is quite good, but there's just not enough of it. ★★

LINE OF FIRE

US Gold £24.99

Uppers – Imagine all the Rambo films back-to-back on fast-forward, and you have a good idea how much violence this game contains. ***Downers*** – You also have a pretty good idea of how intelligent it is. ***The Bottom Line*** – An impossible arcade conversion proves totally and utterly impossible. ★★

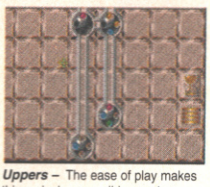
LIVING JIGSAWS

Miles Computing £24.99

Uppers – Likely to appeal to the younger Amiga users. ***Downers*** – Unlikely to appeal to anybody else, anywhere. ***The Bottom Line*** – Lacks any charm whatsoever. Quite silly and pointless all round, really. ★

LOGICAL

Rainbow Arts £19.99



Uppers – The ease of play makes this a nicely accessible puzzler. ***Downers*** – But the amount of time each move takes also makes it a seriously tedious one. ***The Bottom Line*** – In a crowded world of puzzle games, *Logical* is very blunt in the mustard area. ★★

LORDS OF CHAOS

Blade £24.99

Uppers – Great control system, comprehensive and logical. Lots of levels equal great lastability. ***Downers*** – Very little action; not much compulsion to reach your rather abstract goal. ***The Bottom Line*** – A disappointing game from Julian Gollop, not up to his usual standard. Wait for *Laser Squad 2*. ★★★

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE II

Gremlin £24.99

Uppers – Gorgeous graphics, lashings of speed and that hard-to-capture driving atmosphere. ***Downers*** – The lack of crashes is a bit silly, and some track maps would have helped. ***The Bottom Line*** – The best sprite-based driving game we've seen. ★★★★★

LUPO ALBERTO

Idea £25.53

Uppers – Charming characters, a terribly translated manual, and goofy gameplay make it ideal for kids of all ages. ***Downers*** – The animation is funny for all the wrong reasons. Loveable but really rather crap. ***The Bottom Line*** – A game sure to cause argument. A case of try before you buy. ★★

MAGIC POCKETS

Renegade £25.99

Uppers – The usual Bitmap standards of technical excellence, and a fair number of clever ideas. ***Downers*** – The graphics don't suit the game style, the design is too clever for its own good, and the pacing is hopelessly wrong. ***The Bottom Line*** – It'll sell a million, but everyone we've met finds it seriously boring. As a cute arcade platform game it's a disaster. ★★★

MANCHESTER UNITED EUROPE

Krisalis £25.99

Uppers – Fast, pretty, and hugely playable. ***Downers*** – The strategy section is largely superficial (and what there is is optional). ***Bottom Line*** – Great control makes this just about the best football sim so far. ★★★★

MASTERBLAZER

Rainbow Arts £24.99

Uppers – Excellent two player mode, fast 3D action – all in all a respectable updating of the original future-sport game. ***Downers*** – Despite the new

features, *Masterblazer* looks and feels dated. ***The Bottom Line*** – Fun for a few hours, but too simplistic to hold any lasting appeal. ★★★

MAUPITI ISLAND

Lankhor £25.99

Uppers – Pleasantly different, with loads of character interaction. ***Downers*** – Just too small to really justify the price. ***Bottom Line*** – Charming and interesting, but there just isn't enough of it. ★★★

MEGA LO MANIA

Image Works £30.99

Uppers – Brilliant sound effects, gorgeous speech, jolly nice graphics, completely compulsive gameplay. ***Downers*** – Perhaps just a tad frustrating at times. ***The Bottom Line*** – The most accessible and arguably the most enjoyable god-sim to date. ★★★★★

MEGA TRAVELLER 1

Empire £30.64

Uppers – Terrifying depth, friendly and helpful controls, great atmosphere, excellent balance of strategy and action. ***Downers*** – It might all seem a bit too familiar to *Elite* players; occasional long disk-access pauses can irritate. ***The Bottom Line*** – A wonderful piece of role-playing software that everyone should play at least once. After that, you're unlikely to want to stop. ★★★★★

MERCS

US Gold £24.99

Uppers – Faithful conversion of the coin-op, good-looking and fast-moving...***Downers*** – ...but still just another *Commando* clone. ***The Bottom Line*** – Great at what it does, but you're likely to want rather more from a game in this day and age. ★★★

METAL MUTANT

Silmarils £25.99

Uppers – A simple concept (exploration, fighting and puzzle solving) which works well, and has a perfect difficulty curve. ***Downers*** – Lacking any really exciting features, and too simple for some. ***The Bottom Line*** – A middle-of-the-road game, which achieves what it sets out to do, but doesn't really astound. ★★★

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

Ocean £24.99

Uppers – Well-balanced gameplay with a smooth difficulty curve makes it stand out from a hundred similar coin-op conversions. Actually more playable than the arcade original. ***Downers*** – Control is awkward at first; could be a touch faster. ***The Bottom Line*** – Best of its type. ★★★

MIGHTY BOMB JACK

Elite £24.99

Uppers – Classic gameplay with added 16-bit features like, erm, power-ups. ***Downers*** – Sprawling levels lose the original's frantic urgency. ***The Bottom Line*** – Dull, dull, and then again dull. ★

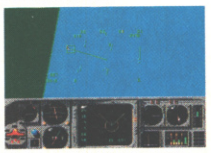
MIG-29

Domark £29.99

Uppers – So real you'll be be hanging pictures of Gorby on your wall. ***Downers*** – Only five missions, with little in the way of excitement. ***The Bottom Line*** – Brave, but ultimately too techie for most Amiga owners. ★★★

MIG 29M SUPER FULCRUM

Domark £39.99



Uppers – For the serious minded flight sim fans, *MiG29M* offers a superior trip, which manages to avoided cloning its predecessor. ***Downers*** – Way short of its competitors in areas such as ground detail and instant action. ***The Bottom Line*** – Expensive, but fans of the original won't be disappointed. ★★★★

MONOPOLY

Leisure Genius £19.99

Uppers – A faithful version of the classic (to say the least) board-game. ***Downers*** – Who the hell wants to play a board-game on their computer anyway? ***The Bottom Line*** – Competently done, but arguably quite pointless. ★★

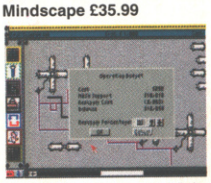
MONSTER BUSINESS

Eclipse £19.99

Uppers – Tons of character and classically simple *Dig Dug*-meets-*Snow Bros* gameplay make this endless fun for nostalgic arcade fans. Great music too, and a halfway-decent price tag. ***Downers*** – Once more, 'simple arcade fun' translates directly as 'shallow and transient kiddie rubbish' for some. ***The Bottom Line*** – A superb arcade platform game with more life in it than a hundred copies of *Magic Pockets*. ★★★★

MOONBASE

Mindscape £35.99



Uppers – Entertaining and addictive game in the best *Sim City* tradition. ***Downers*** – Just a bit too close to *Sim City* for comfort, though. ***Bottom Line*** – Fairly short-term entertainment, and more than a touch overpriced. ★★★

MOONSHINE RACERS

Millennium £24.99

Uppers: Erm, great hillbilly music. ***Downers:*** Slow, graphically horrible, totally derivative. ***The Bottom Line***: Almost as bad as Amiga *Chase HQ*, and you've got to admit that's pretty damn bad. ★

MUDS

Rainbow Arts £24.99

Uppers – Quite funny. ***Downers*** – Do we really need another rugby/basketball/ violence-based future sport? ***The Bottom Line*** – Giving everything silly names doesn't make this game different to the dozen others it's just the same as. ★★

MYSTICAL

Infogrames £24.99

Uppers – Fresh graphical approach to the the usual fantasy scenario. ***Downers*** – Really badly-thought-out two-player mode. ***The Bottom Line*** – An uninspired *Gauntlet* clone. ★★

'NAM

Domark £24.95

Uppers – Heavily researched, convincing and (dirty word) educational strategic war game. ***Downers*** – Very hard to win, the whole serious look to the thing could be a turn off. ***The Bottom Line*** – Political as well as tactical decision making gives a new dimension to war games. ★★★

NARC

Ocean £24.99

Uppers – Great blood-spattering action; very close to the coin-op. ***Downers*** – Very dodgy on the playability front (not to say morally). ***The Bottom Line*** – Limited. ★★

NARCO POLICE

Dinamic £24.99

Uppers – Looks excellent. ***Downers*** – Computer takes a 'creative' attitude towards obeying control commands. ***The Bottom Line*** – Loud and action-packed blaster for expert commandos. ★★

NAVY SEALS

Ocean £25.39

Uppers – Quite good fun in a mindless arcade runaround sort of way. ***Downers*** – Technically unimpressive (to say the least), and there's very little to it. ***Bottom Line*** – Looks like an ST port, but if you can forget you paid £25 for it, it's pretty enjoyable. ★★

NEBULUS 2 – POGO-A-GO-GO

21st Century Entertainment £25.99

Uppers – The winning formula of the original is at the core of the game. ***Downers*** – The addition of power ups ruins the beautiful simplicity which made the first such a classic. ***The Bottom Line*** – A real waste. This is the worst kind of sequel, one which just regurgitates the ideas of its predecessor, but in a far less playable way. ★★★★

NIGHT SHIFT

Lucasfilm (US Gold) £24.99

Uppers – Graphically innovative and full of character. ***Downers*** – Detail-packed background can make it hard to see where the actual platforms are; more time spent loading than playing. ***The Bottom Line*** – A few instructions would work wonders, but the game's overwhelming charm pulls it through. ★★★

NINJA WARRIORS

Virgin £19.99

Uppers – Novel 'Cinemascope'-esque screen layout. Dynamic Loading System is a boon but doesn't get rid of irritating swapping. ***Downers*** – Extremely repetitive action palls quickly. ***The Bottom Line*** – Even for a game of this type, the gameplay is too limited to hold the attention for any length of time. ★★

NITRO

Psygnosis £24.99

Uppers – Groovy graphics, smooth scrolling, excellent car-handling. ***Downers*** – A practically infinite-credit system means the game has little sense of urgency. You have to guess the course on later levels. ***The Bottom Line*** – Needs more in the way of immediate danger to be addictive, but (unlike many similar games) is as fun in one player mode as with a couple of chums. ★★★

OBITUS

Psygnosis £34.99

Uppers – Intro would make a great Amiga *Deathchase* game. ***Downers*** – *Obitus* itself is a dull *Dungeon Master* rip-off. ***The Bottom Line*** – Boring and ridiculously priced. ★★

ONSLAUGHT

Hewson £24.99

Uppers – Lovely sound and music; lots of depth. ***Downers*** – Very confusing graphics and gameplay, and the main sequences are technically below the level of your average budget game. ***The Bottom Line*** – Caught between the two stools of wargaming and platform zap games, this isn't a very good example of either. ★★

OOOPS UP

Demonware £24.95

Uppers – Arcade fun in the *Pang*, er, 'tradition'. ***Downers*** – Colossally inferior to the real thing. ***The Bottom Line*** – The excellent sampled music isn't enough to save this bare-faced rip-off. Check out the real thing instead. ★★

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

Ocean £24.99

Uppers – Utterly mindless genocidal slaughterfest; perhaps the best *Op Wolf* style game to date. ***Downers*** – More of the coin-op's appeal is down to the cabinet-mounted Uzi than you might think, leaving the Amiga version somewhat 'flat'. ***The Bottom Line*** – Everything you could expect a conversion of *Operation Thunderbolt* to be. ★★★

OUTRUN EUROPA

US Gold £24.95

Uppers – A vast improvement on earlier *OutRun* games, and the use of different vehicles adds spice. ***Downers*** – The driving feel isn't as good as it might have been and the levels aren't sufficiently different. ***The Bottom Line*** – A class driving act, but its fails to compete with like of *Lotus II*. ★★★★

PGA TOUR GOLF

Electronic Arts £24.99

Uppers – Excellently presented, comprehensive, and easy as pie to get into. ***Downers*** – There's a limited amount of scope to any golf game, and *PGA* doesn't even try to transcend it. ***The Bottom Line*** – The pinnacle of Amiga golf so far. ★★★★★

PICK'N'PILE

Ubi Soft £19.99

Uppers – Fascinating mix of *Puzznic* and *Boulder Dash*. ***Downers*** – 8-bit graphics don't help visual clarity any. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not enough variation to sustain it for long. ★★

PIT-FIGHTER

Domark £24.99

Uppers – Interesting and distinctive looking beat-'em-up. ***Downers*** – The 3D effect and digitised sprites aren't entirely convincing, and gameplay very shallow. ***The Bottom Line*** – A close conversion of a pretty thin arcade game. ★★

POLICE QUEST 2

Sierra (Activision) £34.95

Uppers – Er, very realistic sim of a policeman's lot. ***Downers*** – ie half the game is form-filling. ***The Bottom Line*** – Too much like a tedious day at the office. ★★

POPULOUS

Electronic Arts £24.99

Uppers – Totally unique gameplay and smooth 3D isometric graphics add up to a game with depth and sparkle. ***Downers*** – The icon control system really is very confusing. ***The Bottom Line*** – An essential for all open-minded Amiga owners. ★★★★★

THE POWER

Demonware £24.99

Uppers – Heaps of levels and a screen designer keep lasting appeal up, and the music is excellent. ***Downers*** – A touch derivative, and lacks that indefinable something that makes a puzzle game great. ***The Bottom Line*** – Try before you buy, you might like it, but rather average to our eyes. ★★★

POWER DRIFT

Activision £19.99

Uppers – All the arcade's tracks, characters, and secret features. ***Downers*** – The graphics can get very confusing, and the gameplay isn't really that close to the original. ***The Bottom Line*** – A good stab at a very difficult conversion, but not quite good enough. ★★★

POWERMONGER

Electronic Arts £29.99

Uppers – The brave new face of wargames... ***Downers*** – ...which looks suspiciously like *Populous*. ***The Bottom Line*** – Despite similarities to a certain other title, *Powermonger* really is an excellent game in its own right. ★★★★

PP HAMMER AND HIS PNEUMATIC WEAPON

Demonware £25.53

Uppers – Nicely old-fashioned platform action. Plenty of scope for double entrendres too. ***Downers*** – Annoying niggles and a tendency towards over-complication spoil it a bit. ***The Bottom Line*** – Good, but it could easily have been a lot better. ★★★

PREHISTORIK

Titus £25.53

Uppers – Some excellent cartoon graphics and humorous touches make it an instantly likeable game. ***Downers*** – Suffers in comparison to *Toki* and *Chuck Rock*. Needs a number of rough edges polishing up. ***The Bottom Line*** – A nice enough little caveman romp, but it's not really an essential purchase. ★★★

PREDATOR 2

Image Works £25.99

Uppers – Lots and lots of zapping to be done and, er, that's about it really. ***Downers*** – Poor colour choice, unimaginative gameplay, bad control feel. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not as good as *Operation Wolf*, and now some £18 more expensive. Don't bother. ★★

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Broderbund £24.99

Uppers – Phenomenal animation, loads of atmosphere and some good old-fashioned gameplay. ***Downers*** – Control is initially tricky, and getting sent to the start of a level every time you die is always annoying. ***The Bottom Line*** – Technically stunning and great fun at the same time. Why can't all games be like this? ★★★★★

PROFLIGHT

Hi Soft £39.95

Uppers – Terrifyingly accurate – possibly the most accurate flight simulator ever. ***Downers*** – Such a good simulator that there isn't really

room for any game at all. ***Bottom Line*** – Miles too realistic to be any fun to play. Still, it's less expensive than a real flying lesson. ★★

PRO TENNIS TOUR 2

Ubi Soft £24.99

Uppers – Possibly the most realistic sports sim to grace the Amiga, with features galore. ***Downers*** – So if you hate the real thing, you won't go for this. ***The Bottom Line*** – Nothing short of wonderful. ★★★★

PURSUIT TO EARTH

Exocet £19.95

Uppers – Reminiscent of *Gyruss*, the classic arcade zapper. ***Downers*** – But completely crap. ***The Bottom Line*** – About as much fun as getting hit by a real Exocet. ★

PUZZNIC

Ocean £24.99

Uppers – Classically simple and very addictive, not to mention original. ***Downers*** – Infuriatingly tough on later levels. ***The Bottom Line*** – Don't be put off by the useless graphics, this is a wonderful brain teaser. ★★★★

QUEST FOR GLORY II – TRIAL BY FIRE

Sierra £40.85

Uppers – Sorry, can't think of any. Oh no, wait, you do get lots of disks for your money. ***Downers*** – But no game to put on them. Incompetently programmed, dreadfully-designed, staggeringly-overpriced trash. ***The Bottom Line*** – Possibly the worst Amiga game you will ever see. Avoid it like an bad-tempered tiger with toothache. ★

RAILROAD TYCOON

MicroProse £29.99

Uppers – Frightening amount of depth. ***Downers*** – Very slow to get into (and very slow even when you *do* get into it). ***The Bottom Line*** – If you've got a lot of time to invest in it, well worth a look. ★★★★

RALLY CROSS CHALLENGE

Anco £19.95

Uppers – Well-programmed *Super Sprint* clone that's great fun with multiple players. ***Downers*** – Limited lastability. ***The Bottom Line*** – Still one of the best in its field, but that's more down to lack of competition than anything else. ★★

RANX

Ubi Soft £24.99

Uppers – Totally ideologically unsound. ***Downers*** – Totally ideologically unsound. ***The Bottom Line*** – Brilliantly-presented but ultimately limited comic strip beat-'em-up. Ideologically unsound. ★★

RBI TWO BASEBALL

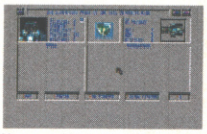
Domark £29.99

Uppers – Excellent simulation of baseball, and beautifully presented to boot. ***Downers*** – Over-priced and

not all that hot on lasting appeal. ***Bottom Line*** – Very good, but a bit limited, and not quite a classic. ★★★★

RENEGADE LEGION INTERCEPTOR

SSI/US Gold £24.99



Uppers – Military hardware a-go-go gives it instant RPG appeal. ***Downers*** – The strategy isn't deep enough, and the action sequences are way out of date. ***Bottom Line*** – Tales of galactic empires and warfare are a good idea, but this one just falls flat. ★

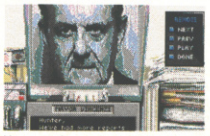
REVELATION

Krisalis £19.99

Uppers – Neat idea – a puzzle game based on safe cracking. ***Downers*** – Too complex to just pick up and play – bad news for a puzzler. ***The Bottom Line*** – Not bad, but could have been better presented (and who thought up that utterly meaningless name?) ★★

RISE OF THE DRAGON

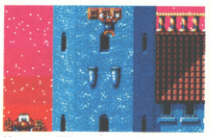
Sierra £34.99



Uppers – Atmospheric Blade Runner-style first-person adventure which combines digitised photos and comic-book presentation. ***Downers*** – Another hard drive game unfortunately, and its not the biggest, most complex adventure ever. ***The Bottom Line*** – Brave, different and very involving. ★★★★

ROBOCOD

Millennium £24.99



Uppers – Wit, console-style graphics and gameplay hide behind a barrage of visual jokes and puns. ***Downers*** – Perhaps it could have been a little 'tighter'. ***The Bottom Line*** – Almost as impressive as *Rainbow Islands*! ★★★★★

ROBOCOP 2

Ocean £24.99

Uppers – Great graphics, generally excellent presentation. ***Downers*** – Awkward controls, some infuriating gameplay traits, and it's all a touch too formulaic. ***The Bottom Line*** – Could have been a good deal better. ★★★

ROBIN HOOD

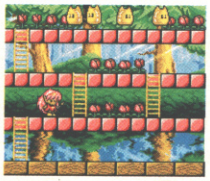
Millennium £25.99

Uppers – Witty and cheerful game that makes you love it almost in spite

of itself. ***Downers*** – Tiny graphics can get irritating, and there are lots of silly little quirks. ***The Bottom Line*** – Likeable game that's a long way short of classic status, but damn good fun all the same. ★★★★

RODLAND

Storm £25.99



Uppers – Too-cute-to-be-true graphics, wonderful presentation, a near-perfect arcade game in the traditional sense. ***Downers*** – If you're looking for depth and complexity, look somewhere else. ***The Bottom Line*** – A magnificent conversion that actually improves significantly on the original coin-op. Loveable and extremely addictive, you couldn't ask for a better platform arcade game. ★★★★★

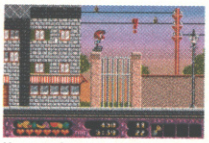
ROGUE TROOPER

Krisalis £24.99

Uppers – Fairly entertaining arcade adventure with devious but logical puzzles and an excellent free collectors' comic. ***Downers*** – One life – one mistake and you're all the way back to the start of the first level (Aaarrgh!) ***The Bottom Line*** – Good fun for the persistent, and a good licence for a change. ★★

ROLLING RONNY

Virgin £25.99



Uppers – Cute, console-style graphics and easy-to-grasp platform gameplay give *Ronny* instant appeal. ***Downers*** – Beneath the varnish lies not very much at all. ***The Bottom Line*** – A very plain game which offers nothing new to Amiga gamers. ★★

R-TYPE II

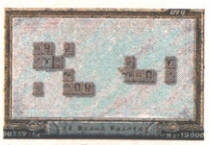
Activision £25.99

Uppers – 99.99percent arcade-perfect, and a beautiful and addictive shoot-'em-up in its own right. ***Downers*** – A couple of tiny bugs, and maybe off-puttingly difficult. (For wimps, anyway). ***Bottom Line*** – The best space blast for the Amiga yet, and possibly the best coin-op conversion too. Absolutely superb. ★★★★★

SARAKON

Virgin £19.99

Uppers – Brilliant *Shanghai*-inspired gameplay makes this a strategy classic, and the price is a



nice surprise. ***Downers*** – Slightly indistinct symbols can occasionally confuse matters. ***The Bottom Line*** – A supremely addictive puzzler, in the finest 'takes over your entire life' tradition. ★★★★

SEARCH FOR THE KING

Accolade £34.99

Uppers – Superb Elvis gags and attention to detail (particularly in the graphics) mean graphic adventure fans will take to it immediately. ***Downers*** – Accolade blow it to a certain extent with their inefficient parser system. ***The Bottom Line*** – Still a long way to go before it competes with the likes of *Monkey Island*. ★★★

SHANGHAI

Activision £19.99

Uppers – Based on an ancient Chinese tile game, so you know it's going to torture your mind, and it does. Friendly presentation too, and the multi-player against-the-clock games are action-packed enough for the most frenzied blasting fan. ***Downers*** – Slightly fiddly graphics can play havoc with your eyes. ***The Bottom Line*** – Scarily gripping for a game with no moving graphics. The first time you do it you'll want to take out an advert in The Times to tell everybody. ★★★★★

THE SIMPSONS

Ocean £24.99

Uppers – A good licence and a good game. Brilliant console-like scrolling arcade platform sort of thing. ***Downers*** – The main game doesn't really rely on the Simpsons theme, and a bit too complicated for Bart's younger fans. ***The Bottom Line*** – The licence of the year, probably. ★★★★★

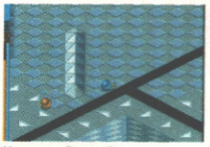
SIRIUS 7

CRL £24.99

Uppers – Technically adequate. ***Downers*** – No thought, no imagination, no game, no fun. ***The Bottom Line*** – Almost as action-packed as *Xenon 2*. In pause mode. ★

SLIDERS

Palace £25.99



Uppers – Clean 3D isometric graphics, with loads of sporting and *Marble Madness* overtones thrown in for good measure. ***Downers*** – The result is frankly less enjoyable than it

sounds. ***The Bottom Line*** – Buy yourself *Spindizzy Worlds* or *Speedball 2* instead. ★★

SKI OR DIE

Electronic Arts £24.99

Uppers – *Skate Or Die* but with snow. ***Downers*** – *Skate Or Die* but with snow. ***The Bottom Line*** – Fun (for a while) with friends, but basically an old fashioned, patchy collection of unimpressive sub games. ★

SKULL AND CROSSBONES

Domark £24.99

Uppers – It's all reasonably true to the coin-op. ***Downers*** – Pity it was so crap then, isn't it? Appallingly slow, critically limited and bug-ridden. ***The Bottom Line*** – You'd have more fun being keelhauled. ★

SPEEDBALL II

Image Works £24.99

Uppers – The ultimate future sport game to date – fast, brutal, enormously playable. The Bitmaps' finest moment. ***Downers*** – Teams can be hard to tell apart in the heat of the action. ***The Bottom Line*** – Buy or die. ★★★★★

SPELLBOUND

Psyclapse £24.99

Uppers – Well-drawn backdrops, and, erm, the packaging is nice. ***Downers*** – Almost no in-game sound, practically nothing in the way of action. ***The Bottom Line*** – Hugely boring arcade adventure thing that's overpriced by £20. ★

SPINDIZZY WORLDS

Activision £24.99

Uppers – Another example of an 8-bit classic brought bang up to date with a sprawling play area and loads of new features. ***Downers*** – Bizarre controls to get to grips with and the graphics could be better. ***The Bottom Line*** – Superlative game design, and total addiction. Frustrating as hell, but nonetheless a masterpiece. ★★★★★

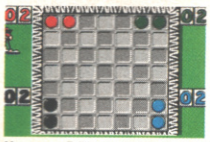
SPIRIT OF EXCALIBUR

Virgin £24.99

Uppers – Plenty of variation, and it certainly all looks lovely. ***Downers*** – Pitifully slow, and the different sections don't really seem to gel together. ***The Bottom Line*** – If you've got a few hours to kill while you're waiting for a train, this is a game that you can load up without fear of it causing you to miss it. (On the other hand, standing on the platform might be more fun). ★★

SPOT

Leisure Genius £25.99



Uppers – Brilliantly-designed Othello based board game which still manages to offer something new and different (and even supports up to four players). ***Downers*** – The presentation lacks polish in places. ***The Bottom Line*** – A class board-like strategy act. ★★★★★

STARGLIDER II

Rainbird £24.99

Uppers – Instant 3D blasting

appeal, with extra depth for those who want it. ***Downers*** – Slightly too repetitive in the long-term. ***The Bottom Line*** – Still one of the best *Star Wars*-inspired releases on the Amiga. ★★★

STELLAR 7

Dynamix (Sierra) £24.99

Uppers – Appealingly old-fashioned blast from the past in the form of (yet another!) up-dated *Battlezone*. ***Downers*** – Ever-so-slightly sluggish vector graphics and optimistic pricing make it a bit of a luxury. ***The Bottom Line*** – Satisfyingly mindless – but that's both a strength and a weakness. ★★

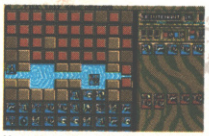
STORMBALL

Millennium £24.99

Uppers – Reasonably passable graphics. ***Downers*** – Utterly dire game design, no feeling of speed or excitement, highly confusing and largely pointless. ***The Bottom Line*** – If you're looking for a good way to waste £25, throw it down a drain rather than buy this. ★

STRATEGO

Accolade £25.99



Uppers – An engaging strategy bash for one player at least, it adheres to the rules and appearance of the board game remarkably well. ***Downers*** – The fact that it can only be a one player game takes all the fun out of it. ***The Bottom Line*** – A fun board game which can never really work on computer. ★★

STRIKER MANAGER

D&H Games £24.99

Uppers – From the people who brought you *Football Director* (yes, that's its only good point). ***Downers*** – Statistic frenzy with absolutely no gameplay whatsoever. ***The Bottom Line*** – Could push the boundaries of computer games backwards by ten years. ★

STUN RUNNER

Tengen (Domark) £24.99

Uppers – Er...the music isn't entirely crap. ***Downers*** – Hopelessly slow, graphically primitive, plus there's a very terminal lack of excitement. ***The Bottom Line*** – We'd rather see a great conversion of *Galaxians* than someone make a pig's ear of a game they knew they couldn't convert in the first place. ★

SUPER MONACO GP

US Gold £24.99

Uppers – Well-programmed and fun. ***Downers*** – Bears very little resemblance to the coin-op. ***The Bottom Line*** – A very good racing game, but don't expect the arcade. ★★★

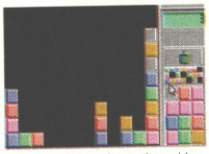
SUPER SKWEEK
Loriciel £19.99

Uppers – Cute *Defusion/Painter*-based game with power-ups and add-ons galore. ***Downers*** – Perhaps a little too French for most of us. ***The Bottom Line*** – Could do with having another fiver chopped off the price, but otherwise great fun. ★★★

SUPER WONDER BOY
Activision £19.99

Uppers – Perfect difficulty curve lets you get just a little bit further every go. Cute graphics add to the charm and the shops where you can spend your gold give it a little extra scope. ***Downers*** – Slightly lacking in action, too slow for some. Not exactly modern looking. ***The Bottom Line*** – Great game in the *Mario* vein, but with less enemies and more depth. ★★★

SWAP
Palace £25.99



Uppers – Interesting and new idea for a puzzle game, programmed perfectly competently. ***Downers*** – It just isn't captivating, and never rises above the averageness. ***The Bottom Line*** – Fails to inspire any emotions at all. It's not good, it's not bad. It's just a bit bland. ★★

SWITCHBLADE II
Gremlin £25.99

Uppers – Gorgeous console-like graphics, tried-and-tested gameplay, packed full of detail and lovely touches. ***Downers*** – Perhaps just a little too simple. ***The Bottom Line*** – Absolutely superb. Arguably the best Amiga platform game to date. ★★★★★

SWIV
Storm £24.99

Uppers – Looks good, sounds good, comes with a neat two-player option – and all in one (massive) level too! ***Downers*** – There aren't any (unless you find all those drab military-style colours a bit depressing). ***The Bottom Line*** – Frantic – one of the best shoot-'em-ups we've seen. ★★★★★

SWORDS AND GALLEONS
Idea £25.99

Uppers – Uses the classic trading game style to great effect. ***Downers*** – Easy to complete and the stupid omission of a save game option. ***The Bottom Line*** – A minority interest sort of affair. ★★

TANGRAM
Thalion £25.53

Uppers – Perfectly adequate computer translation of the classic Oriental puzzle. ***Downers*** – Unfortunately it's a really dumb idea for a conversion, and the extras (time limit and suchlike) are intrusive and pointless. ***Bottom Line*** – Getting a real wooden Tangram set would be more fun, as well as much cheaper. ★

TETRIS
Infogrames £19.99

Uppers – Well, it is still *Tetris*. ***Downers*** – But it's probably the worst version yet seen on the Amiga, and that's saying something. ***The Bottom Line*** – Completely stinky. (Stick with the PD versions). ★

THEIR FINEST MISSIONS
US Gold £15.99

Uppers – A handy missions disk for *Their Finest Hour*, sure to prolong game life. ***Downers*** – It's really only for lazy people who can't be bothered to construct their own missions with the editor in the original game. ***The Bottom Line*** – Fine, but only if you've got the original (obviously). ★★★

THEME PARK MYSTERY
Image Works £24.99

Uppers – Great feel; looks and sounds lovely. ***Downers*** – Arcade sections are fairly pointless. ***The Bottom Line*** – Games which mix adventures with arcade sequences always suffer for it. ★★

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND
US Gold £25.99

Uppers – The closest thing yet to a fully interactive story. Enormous playability, pleasing puzzles and great dollops of – yes! – genuinely witty humour come together to form something very glorious indeed. ***Downers*** – Despite the five disks, you'll still need a full meg, and once the game is completed you'll probably never come back to it again. ***The Bottom Line*** – An adventure that looks and plays better than almost any arcade game. Software heaven. ★★★★★

TEAM SUZUKI
Gremlin £24.99

Uppers – Very fast, with some pretty hairy track views. Unintentionally hilarious replay feature. ***Downers*** – Insanely sensitive to control. ***The Bottom Line*** – Enough fun to keep you playing until you can at least stay on the road for five seconds at 60mph, but a bit too unrealistic to compete with *Indy 500*. ★★★

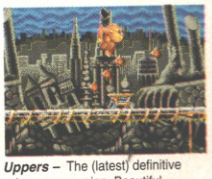
TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES
Mirrorsoft £24.99

Uppers – It doesn't have the word 'Ninja' in the title...***Downers*** – ...but even that doesn't save it from being utterly awful in every way. ***The Bottom Line*** – You'd have more fun playing with a real turtle. Or a real mutant. ★

TERMINATOR 2
Ocean £25.99

Uppers – You get exactly what you'll be expecting - Another Ocean Movie Licence With Lots Of Sub-Games And No Depth. ***Downers*** – Only one of the sub-games has any real merit of its own, and the rest are even worse than the norm for this kind of thing. ***The Bottom Line*** – Pretty hopeless run-of-the-mill effort for real diehard Arnie fans only. ★★★

TOKI
Ocean £25.39



Uppers – The (latest) definitive coin-op conversion. Beautiful platform action to make you go ape. ***Downers*** – The sound is slightly disappointing, and the game is simply too small. ***The Bottom Line*** – What's there is brilliant, if only there was more of it. ★★★★★

TOTAL RECALL
Ocean £24.99

Uppers – A fair bit of gameplay variation. ***Downers*** – Unfriendly controls, uninspired design. ***The Bottom Line*** – Solid but unexciting. No feel for the movie. (And couldn't they afford the rights to use Arnie's real face?) ★★

TOURNAMENT GOLF
Elite £24.99

Uppers – Authentic arcade port. ***Downers*** – Nobody ever played the arcade game. ***The Bottom Line*** – Completely average golfing yawnerama. ★★

TOWER FRA
Thalion £24.99

Uppers – Yes, you guessed it, it's an air traffic control tower simulation. Not as boring as it sounds. ***Downers*** – It's still fairly boring though. ***The Bottom Line*** – Good training for the next generation of air traffic controllers. ★★

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT
Domark/Incentive £49.99

Uppers – Creating your own games (or simply designing little worlds) is great fun. ***Downers*** – Well, it's not really a game as such, is it? It's pretty slow too, and making anything really worthwhile gets very complicated. ***The Bottom Line*** – Expensive and of limited appeal, but if you've always itched to create a Freescape game you can't really complain. ★★★

TURRICAN 2
Rainbow Arts £24.99

Uppers – Enjoyable mindless blasting. ***Downers*** – Erm, has there been some mistake here? Someone appears to have sent us a copy of *Turrican*. ***The Bottom Line*** – Better than the original, but that's the only way in which it's different. ★★★

ULTIMA V
Origin (Mindscape) £29.99

Uppers – The scope and depth of *Ultima V* goes way beyond other role-playing adventures, even previous *Ultima* releases. ***Downers*** – Not a bit of joystick action in sight; some may find the size of the game daunting. ***The Bottom Line*** – *Ultima V* offers arguably the best in graphic fantasy (at least until *Ultima VI* comes along). ★★★★★

UMS II
Rainbird (MicroProse) £34.99

Uppers – The pinnacle of tech-head wargames, with more user-definable bits than you could ever need. ***Downers*** – Atrocious documentation could mentally scar beginners for life. ***The Bottom Line*** – It won't win the wargaming fraternity any new members, but it'll put some in seventh heaven. ★★★

UTOPIA
Gremlin £29.99

Uppers – The appeal of this kind of city-building thing is timeless, and the war side gives it a new dimension. ***Downers*** – ...but neither side is particularly well-designed, and it can easily end up a touch on the dull side. ***The Bottom Line*** – A good game, but it needs a lot more depth to make it a true classic. ★★★★

VECTOR CHAMPIONSHIP RUN
Impulze £24.99

Uppers – Pretty speedy. ***Downers*** – Uncontrollable. ***The Bottom Line*** – What's the point in a game you can't play? (c.f. Rhetorical Questions For Journalists, Vol. 1) ★

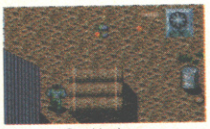
VIZ
Virgin £24.99

Uppers – Very true to the comic. ***Downers*** – Very shallow and limited. The jokes only really work the first time you see them. ***The Bottom Line*** – Fun while it lasts, but after the first couple of hours you've seen all it's got to offer. ★★

WARLOCK THE AVENGER
Millenium £24.99

Uppers – Playable and quite engrossing scrolling arcade adventure romp. ***Downers*** – An 8-bit game in 16-bit's clothing. ***The Bottom Line*** – *Druid* slightly updated for the 90s, and not by any stretch of the imagination worth £25. ★★

WARZONE
Core Design £20.99



Uppers – Graphics have a degree of character to them, and it's pretty tough. ***Downers*** – Adds very little to the hackneyed *Ikari Warriors* format. ***The Bottom Line*** – Competent but deadly dull shoot-'em-up that you've seen a dozen times before. ★★

WHITE SHARKS
Demonware £24.99

Uppers – Exceptionally good graphics, novel 'choose-your-own-power-ups' weapon system. ***Downers*** – Too fast to have any decent feel, and incredibly unimaginative. ***The Bottom Line*** – The game that put the 'bog standard' into 'bog standard shoot-'em-up'. Duff. ★★

WILDLIFE
MD Production £19.99

Uppers – Ideologically sound. ***Downers*** – *Operation Wolf* without shooting is like swimming without water. ***The Bottom Line*** – Utterly desperate. ★

WILD WHEELS
Ocean £25.99

Uppers – Attractive presentation and competent programming make *Wild Wheels* an appealing prospect. ***Downers*** – The whole concept is remarkably shaky, and simply proves unplayable. ***The Bottom Line*** – More like *Mediocre Wheels*, really. ★★

WONDERLAND
Virgin £24.95

Uppers – An evocative telling of the classic Lewis Carrol tale utilising a pretty advanced user-interface. ***Downers*** – Unless you've got a very powerful Amiga with a screen that can handle interlace, the whole thing is very unwieldy. It's not got the best parser in the world either. ***The Bottom Line*** – Brave, but after all the hype the product is something of a let-down. Not a patch on *Monkey Island*. ★★★

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SOCCER
Elite £24.99

Uppers – Very good copy of the coin-op (sob). ***Downers*** – Poor playability, you never get two seconds on the ball. ***The Bottom Line*** – Knocked out in the first round. ★★

WRATH OF THE DEMON
Readysoft £29.99

Uppers – Cheaper than *Shadow Of The Beast II*. ***Downers*** – Almost exactly the same in every other respect, even down to inclusion of a spiffing intro sequence. ***The Bottom Line*** – If you liked *S.O.T.B.II* you'll already have bought it, so you won't need this. Otherwise a good alternative. ★★

WRECKERS
Audiogenic £24.99

Uppers – Some refreshing game ideas add a new angle to the old 'aliens-overrun-space station' story. ***Downers*** – The whole thing feels far too much like an 8-bit game. ***The Bottom Line*** – All the elements of a good game are there – they just haven't been tied together properly. ★★

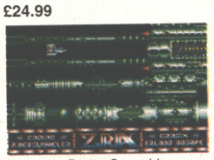
XIPHOS
Electronic Zoo £24.99

Uppers – Silky smooth and subtle. ***Downers*** – Takes far too long to get into the action. ***The Bottom Line*** – Only for the dedicated space trader. ★★

ZARATHRUSTA
Hewson £24.99

Uppers – The *Thrust* gameplay is timeless, and it's been updated with 1990s graphics, resulting in something very special indeed. ***Downers*** – At heart though, it's still a game that used to sell for £1.99 going for £25, which isn't a bargain in anyone's language. ***The Bottom Line*** – Good fun, but to be honest, not really very good value. ★★★

ZIRIAX
The Software Business £24.99



Uppers – Pretty *Scramble* variant. ***Downers*** – Seriously overloaded in the difficulty department. ***The Bottom Line*** – Stupidly difficult, too much for almost everyone. More suited to a budget release. ★★

ZONE WARRIOR
Electronic Arts £25.99

Uppers – Well, you don't see many games of this style anymore. ***Downers*** – But that's a bit of a blessing really. ***The Bottom Line*** – Even the programmers of this trashy arcade adventure must have been left with an empty feeling. ★

Z-OUT
Rainbow Arts £24.99

Uppers – A huge improvement on *X-Out*. ***Downers*** – The horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up with knobs on thing has already been done to death. ***The Bottom Line*** – A better *R-Type* than *R-Type*, but it isn't different enough to make it stand out from the crowd. ★★★

2ND opinion

DOMINIQUE COR OF INFOGRAMES

We're not perfect, of course – there must've been hundreds of times by now when you've thought one of our reviews has been too generous, too harsh, or just plain wrong. Your chance to answer back comes in Do The Write Thing, but for the industry it's a little different – they've got Second Opinion instead. This is where we get people we like to think of as 'top industry professionals' to give their opinions on recent games – the ones they like, the ones they hate, the ones they couldn't give two hoots about. Remember, the opinions voiced here have nothing to do with what we ourselves think of the games (and are probably all the better for it...)

Dominique Cor is the Marketing Manager of Infogrames in the UK – which means he also copes with Loriciel and now Disney products as well as his own. Heavily into English sports cars – little surprise he chose *Lotus Turbo Challenge II* as one of his favourites – we felt so guilty at his mock-offense over the 'Why Are French Games So Weird?' feature in AP6 that we became honour-bound to give him a right to reply. Fully expecting him to take the opportunity to have massive go at English games, what should we find but that he praises most of them, reserving his real bile for (of all things) a German one! Ah well...

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE II

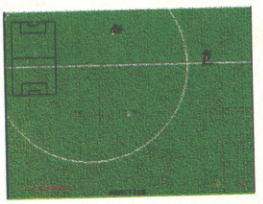
Gremlin

This is the greatest car sim I ever saw. You can play it two players at a time, which is something I always like – all my favourite games have a two player option – and the graphics are good, but that's not the most important part of a car game. No, what matters is the overall impression – that you really believe these cars are going on up the road – and that's what *Lotus II* manages so well.

Before I worked at Infogrames I worked for Porsche cars in France, and used to get to drive them, so I'm very into racing games. I'm looking forward to *Formula One GP* too, of course – from what I've seen it seems to be quite good, but it's probably quite tough to play.

KICK OFF 2

Anco

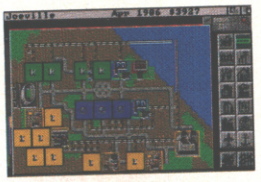


***Kick Off 2*: "this really fast game which just *looks* like football."**

I hate football, so this is quite a surprising one for me to chose perhaps, but I don't know – *Kick Off*, I love it! I refused to play it for ages when it first came out, of course, just because of the subject matter, but once I got started I couldn't stop. When I'm playing *Kick Off 2* I'm not playing football, you see – I'm playing this really fast game which just *looks* like football. I love games where you can play in a league against other people and this one is great for that – some people complain it's not like real football, but that's exactly the reason why I like it! In fact, I like it so much I'm really looking forward to *Kick Off 3*.

SIM CITY

Infogrames



***Sim City*: "a very important game – a reference point."**

This is one that Maxis and ourselves did, of course, and I think it's a very important game – a reference point. I like it because, even though it's so involved, you can play it for five minutes or two hours or more – it doesn't matter, you still have fun.

I also like it because you have so much liberty of action – you can try and build a really small little town, or you can go for the biggest city you can, it's up to you. I'm not very good at it though – I sometimes try and do the set scenarios, but I can't really do it, so I get annoyed and put too many factories in deliberately, just to see how the computer reacts. I never play it seriously.

LEMMINGS

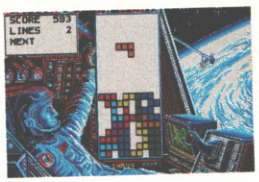
Psygnosis

This is not my type of game – you're playing alone without any friends, and I find it quite hard – but what's really impressive about it is the marketing. The game itself is good, but I'd say 60 percent of the success was down to the way it was marketed. It was the most brilliant job seen in this industry. From the demos everyone had of the game months before it came out to the people dressed as lemmings at shows, it was excellent.

TETRIS

Infogrames, Mirrorsoft and others

This is good, simple and efficient, and anyone and everyone can play it – young, not young, or whatever. It's just perfect for what it is – I don't find it very relaxing though. Some people complain that the commercial versions of *Tetris* haven't been the best, but I don't really understand what they mean. *Tetris* is so simple – how can you mess it up? Do you really need extra features or bright colours or sound to play *Tetris*? I don't think so.



***Tetris*: "Do you really need extra features... to play *Tetris*?"**

SIM EARTH

Ocean

This I'm not so keen on – it's not a game, it's a piece of software. You can play *Sim City* for five minutes and then stop, but *Sim Earth* takes about 20 hours of reading the manual before you even know *where* to start! I know it's not available on the Amiga yet, but I thought I'd mention it anyway – we've had it on the Mac here for ages and ages and nobody ever plays it. It's very well done in many ways, but it's not a game.

TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES

Image Works

Nobody likes this, do they? Well, neither do I! It's one of the baddest games I ever saw – there's nothing in here for anyone, except the *Turtles* of course. I find it very sad – do we try and sell people dreams, or do we try and sell them a licence? I hate it when someone uses a big marketing name but only takes the effort to stick a quick game beneath it. Of course, it's not all Image Work's fault – the original game they were trying to convert was pretty atrocious in the first place.

SUPERCARS 2

Gremlin

I played it once but then I stopped because it wasn't realistic at all – it was a cross between a shoot-'em-up and a sim, the cars were too small and I didn't find it fun. It was boring. I don't really like shoot-'em-ups anyway, but cross it with a driving game and it's a mix that just doesn't work. You can't find any real identity in a game like this.

DINO WARS

Magic Bytes

Did you see it? I don't think a game like this should exist – it's not really a game, and it's bad for the market. There's no gameplay, it's just not finished – you can see that they had this idea about dinosaurs fighting at the beginning and tried to flesh it our into a game, but they didn't really think any of it through properly before they started. The bulk of the game is sort of like an ancient version of chess or *Stratego*, with a river in the middle, then a so-called action battle with the dinos. They have two dinosaurs fighting, it's not very fast, there are only five or six movements – I must admit, I did play it more than once because it's simply so very funny. There's no way you could call this a good game. ●

'I don't think a game like Dino Wars should exist – it's not really a game, and it's bad for the market'

NEXT MONTH: The jaunty January issue of loveable old AP will be with you a few days before Christmas – Thursday, December 19th in fact. Seasons greetings, y'all!

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Zero: Now under normal circumstances cheap usually means poor quality but this is not the case with Rombo. Why? cos Vidi-Amiga is the best digitiser for under £500 and I've tried them all.

Amiga Format: Where quality is concerned, Vidi produces some of the best results I've seen on any digitiser at any price.

Amiga User International: The latest addition to the Rombokit is called Vidi-RGB and brings this already impressive package to the realms of totally amazing. CONCLUSION: Who will find Vidi-Amiga useful? The answer to this is almost anyone with a video recorder or camera and a passing interest in graphics.

Full colour demonstration disk available for only £1.95 to cover P&P.

ROMBO

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NEXT MONTH! The jaunty January issue of AMIGA POWER will be on sale on Thursday 19th December, juat a tad earlier than usual (that Christmas thingie gets in the way, of course). The big news next month is that we'll have two (yes, TWO!) disks on the cover to keep you going through the Christmas period – and wait until you see the stuff we've got to fill them! Wait until you see some of the games we've got for review too – if this isn't the best magazine you ever bought, we'll (um) apologise.

CodeMasters: we talk to the creators of the ever-popular *Dizzy* next ish!

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ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS...

NEXT MONTH! The (very) January issue of AMIGA POWER will be on sale on Thursday 10th December, just a tad earlier than usual (that Christmas thingie gets in the way, of course). The big news next month is that we'll have two (yes, TWO) disks on the cover to keep you going through the Christmas period – and wait until you see the stuff we've got to fill them! Wait until you see some of the games we've got for review too – if this isn't the best magazine you ever bought, we'll (um) apologise.

Codemasters we talk to the creators of the ever-popular Dizzy next issue

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